United Nations A/73/PV.5

General Assembly

Seventy-third session

Official Records

5th plenary meeting

Monday, 24 September 2018, 10.30 a.m.
New York

President: Ms. Espinosa Garcés. . . . . (Ecuador)

The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

Agenda item 66 (*continued*)

Peacebuilding and sustaining peace

High-level plenary meeting, to be known as the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Before we begin with the list of speakers, I would like to address some important organizational matters pertaining to the conduct of plenary meetings.

I would like to appeal to all speakers to keep their statements brief and concise in order to make maximum use of the limited time we have for this high-level meeting. In order to enable all on the list of speakers to be heard, statements in plenary meetings should be limited to three minutes when speaking in a national capacity and five minutes when speaking on behalf of a group, as stipulated in resolution 72/243.

As members will recall, in its resolution 72/313, of 17 September 2018, the General Assembly called for strict adherence by each speaker to time limits in the Assembly, in particular during high-level meetings. To assist speakers in managing their time, a light system has been installed at the speaker's rostrum. Participants with longer statements are encouraged to read a shorter version of their text and to submit their full-length statements to the Secretariat for posting on the PaperSmart portal.

Also in accordance with resolution 72/313, the "all protocol observed" principle is recommended, whereby participants are encouraged to refrain from listing standard protocol expressions during their statements.

Bearing in mind the time limit, I would like to appeal to speakers to deliver their statements at a reasonable pace so that interpretation into the six official United Nations languages may be properly provided.

I appeal for the cooperation of all speakers in observing the time limits for statements so that all those inscribed will be heard in a timely manner.

Finally, in order to avoid disruption for the next speaker, I urge all representatives to remain in their seats after the delivery of each statement. In that connection, I would like to invite speakers, after delivering their statements, to exit the General Assembly Hall through room GA-200, located behind the rostrum, before returning to their seats.

The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda.

President Kagame: Nelson Mandela's centenary presents us with an ideal moment to reflect on what the legacy of the great African freedom fighter and statesman means for us today. He understood that a politics of confrontation and division impedes a nation's social cohesion and progress. Even though the wounds were still fresh, he endeavoured to show that the suffering that he and countless other South Africans had endured could be redirected towards building a more positive future for his country. That was not an easy message, but President Mandela was a true leader

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and inspiring communicator. He did what was right, even when it was not popular.

In Rwanda, our tragic history has taught us the importance of unity and inclusivity for reconciliation and nation-building. We work to ensure that all citizens have equal rights and opportunities and are able to participate actively in shaping our country's direction in meaningful ways. That approach has enabled us to restore trust in public institutions and also in one another. Inclusive and non-sectarian politics is not advantageous in Africa only or in post-conflict situations. As the world has seen, nation-building and national unity are good things wherever they take place. We are fortunate to have Nelson Mandela's example to keep bringing us back to that fundamental truth.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Iván Duque Márquez, President of the Republic of Colombia.

President Duque Márquez (*spoke in Spanish*): On 18 July 100 years ago, South Africa had the honour of becoming the birthplace of an extraordinary human being. Later, the world had the honour of knowing and learning from a great, virtuous, upright and courageous leader. Nelson Mandela was an inspirational man who transcended attitudes and generations, because he combined what few can achieve. He was a man, an icon, a prisoner, a President, a fighter and a peacemaker. Nelson Mandela's leadership was unique.

Today I am here representing a generation and a country that has found inspiration in Mandela's ideals. In Colombia, we are inspired by a society that is fraternal and noble, without exclusion or hatred. Without the exclusion that racism represents, our countries can make great transformations. And without class discrimination, we can build a nation with freedom and justice, dignity and hope, one that never gives up and that desires to build peace through the law, in equality and unity, one that understands very well how sport and culture have the power to unite all races and classes under the same flag.

That resilience, of which Nelson Mandela is a symbol and which also characterizes Colombia, has helped us to address violence, overcome extreme poverty and receive with open arms 1 million of our Venezuelan brothers and sisters, fleeing a terrible dictatorship. Today's Peace Summit is an opportunity to convey to new generations what Mandela's life symbolized. It was a constant struggle to ensure that none of his fellow human beings would be oppressed or enslaved by another.

The centenary of Nelson Mandela's birth should represent an appeal to the world never to forget the infinite capacity for transformation that a leader and a people can possess when they want to correct the errors of the past and build a future. The legacy of Mandela means being able to rise above hatred, serving as an inspiration because this leader helped us to understand that in spite of our differences, the things that unite us are more important.

As Mandela himself said during his trial,

> "I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."

We in Colombia are working hard to make that ideal — of a united country that builds peace through the law — a reality.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana.

President Akufo-Addo: Once in a while, someone comes along who manages to leave an indelible imprint on his generation and humankind. Nelson Mandela, the man in whose memory this plenary meeting on global peace is being held, is clearly one such person. In his own words, he dedicated his life to the struggle of the African people for their freedom and development, and "cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities". The implementation of that commitment not only secured for him 27 years in the apartheid prison of Robben Island, but also his undisputed place in the pantheon of the continent's notables as Africa's greatest-ever leader.

Nelson Mandela came from prison with probably the most recognized name in the world, and the true measure of the man was made evident when he helped to ensure a peaceful outcome of the negotiations among South Africa's historical antagonists. Indeed, when all the experts predicted disaster prior to the negotiations, Nelson Mandela somehow managed to avert a civil war. He held his nerve and with his calm dignity disarmed the most determined of those who wanted a fight to the death. After he won the historic elections of 1994, there was pressure on him to give the oppressors of old a taste of their own medicine. But he stayed firm, helped to cement the reconciliation of post-apartheid South Africa and left office after one successful term as President.

It falls to us who come after him to make his dream of a peaceful world a reality, in which all of us, men and women, young and old, live in harmony. He acted on the proposition that with a spirit of generosity, modesty, humility and fellow-feeling, all of us are capable of inhabiting this planet in dignity, freedom, justice and solidarity. Let us keep alive and thereby burnish the legacy of Nelson Mandela — Madiba. It is the legacy of a deep belief in humankind's limitless potential for good.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Alexander van der Bellen, Federal President of the Republic of Austria.

President van der Bellen: We have gathered here today to honour an extraordinary man who dedicated his entire life to achieving global peace. We pay tribute to Nelson Mandela and to the values he defended. The fall of apartheid was not only a significant success for his own country, South Africa, it was also a political milestone in the endeavours to grant equal rights to people all around the world. However, human rights have once again come under increasing pressure. Our common and overarching message must be that human rights are not a special interest issue. On the contrary, human rights are our rights, and it is our responsibility to uphold and defend them.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has been a major step in our efforts to create peaceful and inclusive societies. Austria continues to support its partners in and outside of Europe in their sustainable social, economic and democratic development and the establishment of the rule of law. In addition, Austria firmly believes that a world with fewer weapons, especially weapons of mass destruction, is a precondition for global peace. In that regard, we would like to reaffirm our strong commitment to effective multilateralism.

Finally, I would like to thank the Group of African States for its initiative to hold this Summit. It affirms our unshakeable commitment to global peace and respect for human rights, including the rejection of violence, racism and repression. Nelson Mandela demonstrated that a successful struggle for those goals requires patience, courage, new ways of thinking and a readiness for reconciliation. Let us all uphold and carry on his legacy.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Lenin Moreno Garcés, Constitutional President of the Republic of Ecuador.

President Moreno Garcés (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I am very grateful to the United Nations for its new facilities that allow persons with disabilities to address the General Assembly. I hope that they will set an example for the rest of the world.

Today, it is an honour to commemorate here the centenary of the birth of our beloved Nelson Mandela, who was undoubtedly one of the greatest men in world history. However, I must say that I wish his prophecy did not still ring so true: that as long as poverty, injustice and inequality persist in our world, none of us can rest. We do not let our great people rest, because world peace has yet to be achieved.

Beloved Nelson Mandela, you were, of course, also a man of arms, and you knew very well which were the most effective and far-reaching. You always said that the best weapon is that of sitting down and talking, because no problem is so acute that it cannot be overcome through discussion and negotiation, if all parties are willing, instead of using force and violence.

However, we are not heeding your advice, beloved Madiba. We have not understood that peace must first be born in the hearts of each and every one of us. The great peacemakers are upright and honest people, but above all they are humble, because one of the most difficult things is not to change society, but to change ourselves. Since no power on this Earth can destroy the yearning for human dignity, I now believe that it is in that yearning that we will find the foundation and mortar for peacebuilding, given that overcoming poverty is not an act of charity but an act of justice, as you stated.

I thank you, teacher of peace, because from you we learned that our task is to liberate not the oppressed but the oppressors. You believed that it is not generals or kings — and I would add rulers to that list — who make history, but the masses. You always said, "Do not judge me by my successes. Judge me by how many times I fell and got back up again". Your compulsion to get back up, each time more triumphant, was paradoxical and surprising, perhaps because you were an important testament to the fact that we should not allow fear to get in our way. I thank you, great Mandela, for this legacy, which we must build on and maintain: a multicultural, diverse society in which every man, woman and child is treated equally and a world in which all people of all races — I would prefer to speak only of the human race — work together in harmony.

That is what will happen and that is what we who are committed to building new nations for our children promise, because, like you, they are our greatest treasure and because they are our future. Those who abuse them rend the fabric of our society and weaken our nations, because the sun has never set on so glorious a human achievement. Madiba, it is our duty to ensure that the day comes when, as you said, freedom will reign.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

President Al Sisi (*spoke in Arabic*): Today, it is a pleasure for me to participate in the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit, which coincides with the commemoration by the world and Africa of the centennial of the birth of the late African leader, whose legacy embodied the aspiration of the African people to independence, dignity and the elimination of all forms of discrimination. Along with other immortal symbols of Africa, such as Nkrumah, Abdel Nasser, Sékou Touré and Nyerere, he expressed the hope of establishing the principles of equality and justice among all peoples. Mandela adhered to those principles with honesty and dignity while he made great sacrifices to liberate his country from the abhorrent system of apartheid. It is therefore natural for his people to carry his legacy forward with unwavering loyalty and for his name to symbolize African hope and that of all peoples around the world for the enjoyment of freedom, justice and equality.

I congratulate President Ramaphosa on the convening of this commemorative Summit and on the selection of a theme that reaffirms the values of world peace in all its forms, encourages us to redouble our efforts to attain peace and sustainable development, and reasserts the principles of human rights.

In today's world, we urgently need effective policy and operational frameworks to address the root causes of conflict, promote good governance, respect human rights in all their dimensions, and eradicate poverty and epidemics. We must also empower women and young people with a view to truly honouring and rising to the human aspiration of sustainable development. We must also join hands and sincerely cooperate in order to defeat terrorism and fight the scourges of extremism, racism, discrimination, sectarianism and intolerance.

From this rostrum, I would like to underscore Egypt's support for efforts to strengthen the role of the United Nations in promoting integrated approaches to enhancing the Organization's effectiveness, efficiency and credibility. The aim is to reinforce its ability to attain the goals and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security, preserving the values of tolerance, mutual respect, and understanding others. Those are the values that characterize the legacy of the leader Nelson Mandela and serve as a shining light for multilateralism.

Today's meeting is a good opportunity to take stock of and ascertain what is lacking in the international system and what needs to be developed to uphold those important values and objectives. Nelson Mandela was and remains a symbol for the African continent, which is facing basic challenges embodied in the need of all our children for a good education that will enable them to face the future; scarcity of water and food; desertification; and weakness in health-care provision that may allow diseases and epidemics to prevail in the future. Indeed, there is also a shortfall in international cooperation mechanisms that has led to the current situation in Africa, which we look forward to changing with strong will, perseverance and the courage to take hard decisions.

Let us move forward together to achieve the objectives of this historic Summit by recalling the principles and values adopted by the leader Nelson Mandela during his struggle. Let our common goal be to offer our peoples a better future in a more peaceful and stable world.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez, President of the Councils of State and Ministries of the Republic of Cuba.

President Díaz-Canel Bermúdez (*spoke in Spanish*): We are very happy and encouraged that the General Assembly has convened a peace summit bearing the name of Nelson Mandela.

Less than 30 years ago, the beloved Madiba was a political prisoner in an apartheid jail, imprisoned for life as a result of his noble struggle for justice and equality among all the men and women of South Africa, where a white minority subjected the black majority to the scorn of segregation. We have not forgotten that, during the dark years of apartheid and long after being elected as President, Mandela and the most brilliant and honest African fighters were kept on lists of alleged terrorists.

Cuba is honoured to recall that it shared in his struggles on the front line of combat, together with his African brothers from Angola and Namibia. We will never forget Cuito Cuanavale. In that regard, there was no greater recognition than the embrace of a free Mandela with our historic leader, Fidel Castro, on Cuban territory.

I hope that we pay tribute to Mandela not only as the first black President of South Africa and the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, but also as a rebel who was forced to fight against injustice when peaceful paths were closed, a political prisoner, a defender of human rights and the rights of his people, and a politician who changed history. We are pleased that, in remembering Mandela, we recognize the heroic struggle of the South African people against the disgraceful apartheid regime, led by the African National Congress with the support of many leaders and combatants who dedicated their lives to the cause of freedom in Africa.

The First Secretary of our Party, Army General Raúl Castro Ruz, described Mandela as a prophet of unity, reconciliation and peace. For his part, the Commander-in-Chief of the Cuban revolution, Fidel Castro Ruz, defined him as an example of an absolutely complete man, unwaveringly strong, courageous, heroic, serene, intelligent and capable, which is how the Cuban people also remember Nelson Mandela.

We are alarmed by recent announcements of increases in military spending, which will send the world into a new arms race, to the detriment of the enormous resources that are needed to build a world of peace. There can be no development without peace and stability or peace and stability without development. There can be no peace and security for people suffering from high levels of poverty, chronic hunger and malnutrition, poor health and limited access to drinking water, illiteracy, high rates of infant mortality, deaths from preventable diseases and low life expectancy.

To achieve a world in which peace and the peaceful solution of conflicts prevail, we must address their root causes. The millions who are excluded by the unfair international economic order, the displaced, the hungry and those fleeing from war and a lack of opportunity to lands of abundance built from the plundering of our peoples are the victims of a silent and silenced segregation. Much remains to be done in order to make Mandela's dreams come true. The only tribute worthy of his memory is to foster the development of disadvantaged nations. We need deeds rather than words; cooperation, not intervention; and solidarity, not pillage.

Blood ties unite Cuba and Africa. The cultural heritage of the African continent in the idiosyncratic make-up of Cubans is undeniable. The culture and the best values of Africa's peoples have nurtured our own. We are inspired by their courage, nobility, wisdom and capacity for resistance. Cuba's collaboration with the peoples of Africa has been maintained for more than 50 years as a priority of the foreign policy of the Cuban revolution.

International peace remains threatened by the philosophy of domination. That is why we make Mandela's words our own; we too want to be masters of our own destiny. Let us therefore work for the future of peace to which our peoples are entitled. Let us truly and fully honour the unforgettable Mandela, whom the historic leader of the Cuban revolution called an apostle of peace.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Hage G. Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia.

President Geingob: An article by Dr. David Sack on the website *Psychology Today*, entitled "The Five Traits of Extraordinary Ordinary People", listed the five unique characteristics of the people whom we all admire most, who live genuine, authentic and generous lives. Those traits are a focus on the things that matter, kindness, a willingness to be seen as imperfect, an ability to connect and, lastly, joyfulness.

The extraordinary ordinary personality who we are commemorating today — a man we know affectionately as Madiba — is someone who exhibited those unique traits during his lifetime. So profound was his effect on humankind that the impact of his life will resonate for centuries to come. Madiba was a man who focused on the things that mattered — the freedom and dignity of his fellow human beings. He chose to forgo his own safety, comfort and dignity and was labelled a terrorist and imprisoned for 27 years for the sake of the freedom of the oppressed peoples of apartheid South Africa and southern Africa.

Madiba was a man of kindness — a kindness that was genuine and that he transferred to the people of South Africa and the world through the concept of the rainbow nation. He believed that, through kindness, all human beings could hold hands and live in peace, harmony and understanding.

Madiba was willing to be seen as imperfect. His acceptance of imperfection is encapsulated in the famous words, "the greatest glory in living life lies not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall".

Madiba had an ability to connect. Who can forget his trip to Orania in 1995 to meet Mrs. Betsie Verwoerd, the widow of one of the chief architects of the apartheid system, Hendrik Verwoerd?

Mr. Arrocha Ruiz (Panama), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Finally, Madiba had an innate joyfulness. Despite his life of struggle, he never stopped smiling. He never stopped dancing. Madiba danced. He never stopped living. His joyfulness permeated every facet of South African life, giving rise to that famous Madiba magic, which was experienced at various sports arenas. Madiba once said,

> "For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others".

As a United Nations family, let us honour that extraordinary personality by not just seeing freedom as the casting off of chains of oppression but by living in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of every human being on our planet.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. George Manneh Weah, President of the Republic of Liberia.

President Weah: It is an honour to stand here today to pay homage to Africa's greatest hero, Nelson Mandela, on the centenary of his birth. He was a man who fought to free his people from the shackles of apartheid; a man who enlightened the minds of his people to give them courage and hope to stand against racial segregation; a man whose enemies kept him in prison doing hard labour for almost three decades and did not succeed in breaking his spirit. When he was freed and given the mantle of authority, he forgave his captors and oppressors and united South Africans of all races into a rainbow nation.

Nelson Mandela was a personal hero to many and a role model. He served as an inspirational reservoir of courage in the face of many adversities. Nelson Mandela taught that peace comes through reconciliation because he believed that a reconciled nation brings about development and prosperity for its people. That lesson has been emulated by many, including myself. I followed his philosophy and accepted the role as a UNICEF Peace Ambassador to help humankind, which has allowed me to travel the world in the quest for peace and true reconciliation. Nelson Mandela inspired me to work tirelessly to help disarm child soldiers during Liberia's civil crisis and bring peace to my country. As he once said, "Courageous people do not fear forgiving, for the sake of peace".

We are all very fortunate to have spent time on the same planet during his lifetime. All of our lives in many ways are better because we have been fortunate to know him or of him — Baba Madiba, a reconciler and peacemaker. Let us honour him by promoting peace, because without peace and reconciliation our world would not be stable.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia.

President Lungu: It is with a great sense of honour that Zambia has joined the rest of the international community in showing appreciation for the convening of the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit, which focuses on global peace in honour of the centenary of the birth of Nelson "Madiba" Mandela.

Today I am pleased that we are able to honour the legacy of a great leader and son of Africa, whose contributions to global peace have remained for the world to emulate. The principles and values that Nelson Mandela and our founding fathers in Africa's front-line States stood for — those of sacrifice and struggle, human rights, mutual respect, tolerance and reconciliation in our relations — should remain the bedrock in our search for lasting peace. Love, peace and forgiveness should continue to be at the core in seeking sustained global peace. Mandela proved to the world that healing is possible and that reconciliation remains at the heart of human development. The name of Mandela resonates with that of the fight for freedom, not only in his native South Africa but in all corners of the world.

In the quest for peace and the fight against apartheid, Zambia became home to many of South Africa's freedom fighters and was host to the African National Congress from 1963 to 1994, with its headquarters in Lusaka, the capital city of Zambia. As one of the front-line States, Zambia actively contributed to ending apartheid and minority rule in South Africa, eventually leading to the release of Nelson Mandela. Today, his legacy of peace deserves the commendation of the entire global community.

Two weeks after his release from 27 years of incarceration, Nelson Mandela's first visit outside South Africa was to Zambia. The visit was in recognition of the efforts and great sacrifices of the people of Zambia in upholding the valued principles of peace and freedom. They are and remain the virtues, including reconciliation, that form the foundation of human development. I therefore wish to call upon the international community to redouble its efforts to build a just, peaceful, prosperous, inclusive and fair world by placing human dignity at the centre of all our actions.

Let me applaud the Assembly for designating the period 2019-2028 as the Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace. There is no doubt that it will provide our global village with a great opportunity to advance human rights, freedom and peace for all.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe.

President Mnangagwa: I wish to express my Government's gratitude for the adoption of resolution 72/243 in December 2017, on the holding of today's high-level meeting focusing on world peace to mark the centenary anniversary of Nelson Mandela's birthday. Today's centenary celebration is indeed an occasion to reflect on his life and legacy. We applaud the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the United Nations for organizing various events to celebrate and keep alive the legacy and unique contributions of Nelson Mandela. His sacrifices and tireless commitment to justice and equality, as well as his courage, magnanimity and compassion, continue to motivate and inspire the world.

As a great visionary, he remains a beacon of peace, and we cannot afford to let his vision fade. In spite of his long imprisonment, Nelson Mandela was never a hostage of his past by becoming retributive. Instead, he rose above the challenges and directed his efforts towards promoting reconciliation and building a peaceful, multiracial and democratic South Africa Let us be emboldened by the words of Nelson Mandela, who said:

> "[D]o not look the other way. Do not hesitate. Recognize that the world is hungry for action, not words. Act with courage and vision."

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that honouring Nelson Mandela without action to address his concerns would be a betrayal of the immense sacrifice he made in his lifetime. He once said, "sometimes it falls upon a generation to be great. You can be that generation". Indeed, we can be that great generation by providing global leadership and ensuring that his invaluable ideals of peace, equality, human dignity and justice are realized and upheld throughout the entire world, for the betterment of present and future generations. I wish the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit fruitful and successful deliberations.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Danny Faure, President of the Republic of Seychelles.

President Faure: This year, a true son of Africa and a giant of history would have celebrated his 100th birthday. Today we have come together to commemorate the memory of a man who stood for social justice and universal peace, while also acknowledging his enduring legacy.

When Nelson Mandela was growing up in a small village named Mvezo 100 years ago, there was no reason to think he would change the course of history. But through his sacrifice, his leadership and, most importantly, his belief in the human spirit and its infinite capacity for good, he set an example for the world. It is not enough that we preach the great ideals for which he stood if we practise the opposite. We have a golden opportunity as leaders to ensure that we govern with the philosophies of peace and equitable progress he championed.

Today, I renew my commitment to living by the ideals of the late Nelson Mandela and ensuring that his message of equality, democracy, dignity and goodness lives on through the people I have been entrusted to serve. I also believe that to fully achieve Madiba's vision for the world, the state of our planet and only home must be protected at all costs. If we fail to take responsibility for our actions and the impact we are having on our environment, we run the grave risk of condemning our children to the fate that he struggled during his lifetime to abolish.

A common thread unifies all our people — a longing for peace, prosperity and an equitable future. We must work hard to ensure that it becomes a reality. Nelson Mandela said that,

> "to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others".

We must live and lead by that truism. Only then will we have fulfilled his legacy.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Uhuru Kenyatta, President and Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces of the Republic of Kenya.

President Kenyatta: I am equally delighted to participate in today's historic Peace Summit in honour of Nelson Mandela, a unique African icon. In March 2009, I had the unique fortune of meeting the global icon and that encounter left an indelible mark on my life. Madiba reflected the best in us: humility, forgiveness, compassion, selflessness and integrity. He gave us a glimpse of what we could become if we set our sights on making the world a better place and have the courage to move the obstacles that stand in the way.

Madiba occupies a special place for us in Africa and, indeed, the world. We are proud heirs to his legacy and that of other heroes, such as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Léopold Senghor of Senegal, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia and Sir Seretse Khama of Botswana, just to mention a few. Those leaders planted the seeds of freedom, pan-Africanism, development, democracy and peaceful coexistence. The greatest honour we can bestow on Madiba and other African heroes is to emulate them and work determinedly towards a united, peaceful and prosperous continent. We should rededicate ourselves to African solidarity with the shared values of freedom and human dignity. We should seek home-grown solutions to our challenges and pursue amicable negotiated settlements to disputes for sustainable peace and political stability, which are prerequisites for meaningful social and economic development.

Nelson Mandela stands as a beacon of hope for us in Kenya as we continue to nurture and consolidate social cohesion and peaceful coexistence among people of different ethnic groups and races. Madiba continues to inspire us to seek regional peace and political stability. Over the years, Kenya has supported peace and political stability in Somalia by hosting and facilitating negotiations, contributing troops to the African Union Mission in Somalia, and providing technical support. In addition, Kenya is involved, alongside other member countries of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, in seeking sustainable solutions in South Sudan. Today, we earnestly hope that in the spirit of today's Peace Summit, parties to the revitalized Agreement in South Sudan will set their differences aside and work together in its implementation for the good of the South Sudanese, who have borne the brunt of an unnecessary war.

As I conclude, allow me to echo the sentiments of previous speakers in supporting the adoption of the Nelson Mandela political declaration (resolution 73/1). We reaffirm our commitment to the values of Nelson Mandela and to the pursuit of the ideals that define his legacy, including the promotion of peace, reconciliation, non-discrimination, and the protection and promotion of human rights. I welcome in particular the recognition of the period 2019-2028 as the Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace, as a constant reminder to all Members to redouble their efforts in the pursuit of peace, development and human rights for all.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by Her Excellency Ms. Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović, President of the Republic of Croatia.

President Grabar-Kitarović: The great Nelson Mandela said, "Give a child love, laughter and peace". That statement takes me back in time to the early 1990s, when a teary-eyed girl in a bright blue coat, literally reflecting the bleak ruins of Vukovar and thousands of worn-out people driven out from underground shelters, became the face of war in Croatia. Looking back, I realize how far we in Croatia have come. However, as we look around the world today, 100 years after Mandela's birth and five years after his death, it seems as though there have never been so many children living without love, in extreme poverty or dying of hunger and armed conflict.

The migrant and refugee crisis is one of the most pressing challenges in the world today. It brings together all of the issues that we have been discussing for decades — armed conflicts, poverty, humanitarianunger, climate change, terrorism and many others. It is our duty to strengthen cooperation and jointly address those issues through existing mechanisms and instruments, but also to try to find new, better and viable solutions. That duty is also part of Mandela's legacy.

We must spare no effort to restore confidence in the institutions of the United Nations and in our collective security. For the sake of the United Nations and its effectiveness, we should improve the way we reach collective decisions, especially in situations of grave violations of human rights and breaches of international humanitarian law. We should believe in building strong and resilient societies, while shifting the focus from crisis resolution to prevention, political dialogue and active engagement. That is also part of the great Mandela's legacy.

Special attention must be paid to the protection and empowerment of women and girls and their equal participation and full involvement in all social structures. Respect for the dignity and rights of every single person and the values of diversity and peaceful coexistence have no alternative. It is of vital importance to preserve the tradition of intercultural, inter-ethnic and interreligious dialogue, especially with respect to fighting violent extremism.

Let me conclude with another quote from Nelson Mandela — a rare global moral authority and a great African. "We can change the world and make it a better place. It is in our hands to make a difference." Let us be the generation that has the courage to do so.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Maithripala Sirisena, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

President Sirisena (*spoke in Sinhalese; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): Today we are gathered here at the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit, the organization and convening of which was a commendable endeavour that deserves appreciation, especially from the people and the Government of Sri Lanka.

Nelson Mandela was a great humanitarian and the epitome of reconciliation. He was a great leader who showed the world the path we must all take. Today, we are gathered here to pay tribute to him because there is dearth of such leaders in the world. Nelson Mandela set a great example for the world with regard to letting go of power. He showed the world what should be done by those wielding power. When we observe today's world, it is clear that it is taking an entirely different direction. Therefore, the world needs to recall the journey taken by Nelson Mandela.

In the world in which we live, it is clear that Nelson Mandela's qualities are lacking in many of today's leaders. Peace among nations, reconciliation and humanitarianism were some of the examples set by Nelson Mandela. That is why it is very important that world leaders take the time to study the character and journey of this great leader, including his humanitarianism, immense love for people and feelings about power. He was not power-hungry; he was willing to let go of power.

For more than 27 years he was not in power but he had no desire to hold on to it once he was elected as the leader of his nation. Therefore, we must pay tribute to this leader. I invite all world leaders to emulate the journey of the great Nelson Mandela.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola.

President Lourenço (*spoke in Portuguese; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): We commend the initiative of the United Nations to pay a fair and well-deserved tribute to Nelson Mandela, an outstanding son of Africa and of the world, whose example of dignity, resilience and tolerance remains a model of moral strength and an inpiration for millions of people fighting for social justice and the progress of humankind. The courage and political strength with which Nelson Mandela faced the apartheid regime in South Africa and resisted the sustained captivity imposed on him by the racist regime, as well as the forgiveness he showed to his former jailers, reconciled and united South Africa and rightly earned him international recognition as an outstanding freedom fighter.

Not only did Nelson Mandela fight for the freedom of his people; he also ensured the freedom of his oppressors. We join others in paying tribute to him on the centenary of his birth and recognize the common fight of Angolans and South Africans against racial segregation in all its forms in favour of a free and fair society with equal opportunities. While paying tribute to Nelson Mandela, we should not forget the millions of anonymous freedom fighters in Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, Zimbabwe, South Africa itself and other countries in southern African who were inspired by his example and sacrificed their lives to transform the region into a safe, peaceful, democratic and free place. Long live Nelson Mandela.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi, President of the Republic of Botswana.

President Masisi: It is a great honour for me to address this gathering, convened befittingly to pay tribute to the world's venerated Nobel Peace laureate, the late President Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela. As we celebrate the centennial of a man who lived as the embodiment of the liberation struggle, we should be reminded of his sacrifice and the legacy of peace he bequeathed to future generations. Today we bask in the very freedom that he fought for with gusto. We can only truly honour him by jealously guarding the freedom we so greatly enjoy.

My own country, Botswana, as a founding member of the front-line States — a coalition of countries that sought to end apartheid and white-minority rule in southern Africa — made a modest contribution to the liberation struggle. Botswana provided safe haven and assisted the freedom fighters in any way we could, sometimes with dire repercussions from the South African apartheid regime. We tactfully and skilfully defied the ultimatums issued to us, as we fully understood that none of us could be truly free when our brothers and sisters next door remained under the shackles of oppressive regimes. We contributed to the armed struggle without bearing arms ourselves. We joined in the great jubilation following the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990 and equally in 1994, when he was inaugurated as President of a free South Africa. We remain humbled that Botswana was the first country that Nelson Mandela visited in 1962, in his quest for international support for the liberation struggle, and again upon his release from prison in 1990.

I am confident that if Mandela were here today he would without reservation endorse our mantra of leaving no one behind. Let us therefore leave here with these words of Rolihlahla himself:

> "No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite."

In conclusion, Botswana fully endorses the Mandela Peace Summit political declaration (resolution 73/1). It is an honour befitting an exceptionally great man and one of the greatest leaders of our time. He lived a purpose-driven life that has touched and enriched us all, directly or indirectly. Let us do good by him for we are all better off for having been touched by him.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Adama Barrow, President of the Republic of The Gambia.

President Barrow: It is with much esteem that I wish to pay tribute to Madiba Nelson Mandela on the centenary of his birth and underscore the importance of today's Peace Summit, organized to recognize and honour the enduring legacy of a very special world citizen — a man of peace and compassion and a strong defender of social justice and equality.

The whole world has noted with admiration that, in spite of the unique situation in his homeland, his lifelong struggle was not solely about liberating South Africa from injustice and oppression; rather, it was about making the entire world a better place for all. That made Nelson Mandela a noble, global citizen with a global vision for humankind. As we devote this Peace Summit to celebrating the centenary of his birth, I submit that we should reflect on some of the lessons from his life for the betterment of our world.

Today, racism, the dislike of foreigners, modern-day slavery and intolerance are as rife across the world as never before. It is a paradox that the evils that Mandela struggled against decades ago persist, and in fact pose a threat to his dream of a better world. It is wise and fitting, therefore, that world leaders draw from his wisdom, strength and resolve to stamp out such vices and transform the world into a safer and better place for all.

When Nelson Mandela devoted his life to truth, national reconciliation and healing in post-apartheid South Africa, he was living what he believed in. Mandela believed in dialogue and reconciliation as necessary elements for brokering, promoting and maintaining peace. That makes it necessary for all leaders to draw inspiration from his statesmanship, to be genuine in word and in deed, and to work closely to stop all conflicts from developing and raging on. That is particularly relevant to Africa, where conflicts continue to erupt. The world at large, and Africa in particular, does not only have a distinguished statesman to emulate in Madiba, but also a mission to fulfil. Mandela left behind the unfinished mission of attaining global peace and progress.

As his strategy, Nelson Mandela devoted his life to preventive diplomacy and the peaceful resolution of conflicts, and he intervened at critical moments to end conflicts and discord across Africa and beyond. He won many hearts by continuing that mediating role as an elder statesman, even after he left office as President. In that light, I call on the United Nations, the African Union and all regional organizations to promote and invest in preventive diplomacy, and to participate actively in efforts for mediation and conflict resolution.

Mandela's exemplary leadership qualities will remain a source of inspiration for posterity. His enduring legacy is his struggle to make the world a better place for all. Let us honour that legacy today with the pledge that, as we leave this hallowed Hall, we will rededicate our lives to making the world a better place for all. I would like to end with a timeless quotation from a landmark statement by Mandela to the General Assembly in 1994. He said,

> "The millions across our globe who stand expectant at the gates of hope look to this Organization to bring them peace, to bring them life, to bring them a life worth living." (*A/49/PV.14, p. 10*)

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Hassan Rouhani, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

President Rouhani (*spoke in Farsi; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): At the outset, I would like to offer prayers for the peaceful rest of the martyred souls who were killed on Saturday during the cowardly terrorist attacks in the city of Ahvaz and declare the ever more resolute stance of my nation in the fight against terrorism in all its forms.

Today's commemoration by the General Assembly of the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela is a praiseworthy message of support for global peace. Nelson Mandela's long and formidable journey to freedom — from his birth and childhood in a small village to his joining the anti-racism movement, which resulted in long years of imprisonment and his ultimate restoration to freedom and rise to presidency — are distinctive and unique in contemporary history.

Mandela was a close and loyal friend of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the years prior to the victory of the Islamic revolution. The royal regime in Iran at the time had established very strong relations with the Zionist entity and the apartheid regime, which were among the closest allies of the United States of America. During those years, Iran was the main supplier of energy to both regimes. However, following the victory of the Islamic revolution and inspired by the will of its people to support the South African liberation movement, the Iranian Government severed all relations with both the Zionist and the apartheid regimes. Following the collapse of the apartheid regime and the establishment of democracy in South Africa, relations between Iran and South Africa entered a new phase that continues to develop.

The suffering endured through hard times of struggle did not compel Mandela to abandon his methods, which were based on the pursuit of peace and accord. The way Mandela treated his enemies and opponents after his release from prison was so merciful that he sowed the seeds of amity and compassion in their hearts. It is a historical reality that great statesmen tend to build bridges rather than walls. While racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia make it easier to build walls instead of bridges between nations, it is dialogue, tolerance and peaceful coexistence that constitute the building blocks to overcome differences and divisions.

I strongly believe that Nelson Mandela was one of the greatest men in contemporary history who considered the establishment of peace and friendship as an absolute necessity rather than a mere expediency.

Over the past decades, the Islamic Republic of Iran has spoken in the Assembly to inspire such initiatives as dialogue among civilizations and a world against violence and extremism, pursuant to efforts to strengthen multilateralism and develop international peace and cooperation. Iran remains firm and resolute in that intention and warmly greets all pro-peace and pro-tolerance leaders.

A remedy for racism, xenophobia, violence and hatred must be sought through dialogue, tolerance and democracy. That is the same path that Mandela bravely forged for real and genuine statesmen. The name and memory of that great man shall live on eternally. May his soul rest in peace.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Jorge Carlos De Almeida Fonseca, President of the Republic of Cabo Verde.

President Fonseca (*spoke in Portuguese; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): Along with freedom, peace and the stability that it enables and progress that it promotes is undoubtedly the greatest public asset for humankind and interaction among nations. Nelson Mandela, the great symbol of peace, naturally inspires and guides us as States and nations in our reflection, action and responsibility to do everything possible so that the world may achieve global peace.

Unfortunately, even in this first quarter of the twenty-first century, we continue to lament the existence and proliferation of new conflicts, resulting in more suffering and destruction of life. In this seventieth year since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, many grey areas persist and continue to blemish the face of human dignity. Three years after adopting the Sustainable Development Goals for our people and our planet, women and men face the risk of being left behind if we do not find solutions to finance the achievement of the goals established for 2030.

Fortunately, it is not all doom and gloom if we turn to examples that point us in the right direction — examples where conflicts have ended or been avoided, human rights have been promoted and poverty has been reduced. Those examples support the vision of the Secretary-General, whom I congratulate for establishing a mutual relationship of cause and effect between sustaining peace and sustainable development. Let us follow examples where political dialogue has prevented the outbreak of conflict and development has enhanced the possibilities for peace. Finally, let us follow the examples set by Nelson Mandela's actions of political struggle, as well as tolerance and advocacy for the ideals of justice.

For Cabo Verde, in its struggle for emancipation from colonialism, Nelson Mandela's example was more than a point of reference; it was an anchor. The peace we have preserved since independence has been our greatest achievement. It has allowed us to progressively restore a democratic rule of law that respects and protects fundamental rights and freedoms. We believe that the example of Cabo Verde, albeit small, is still a powerful example of our intrinsic strength. Just as we have relied on international solidarity, our contribution to a world with more peace and development lies in the modest contribution of our example and in working in solidarity with others. May we honour the memory of Nelson Mandela. May we have peace and development throughout the world.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of the Portuguese Republic.

President Rebelo de Sousa (*spoke in Portuguese; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): In 1993, Madiba visited Portugal. He had just won his freedom, and soon afterwards he would be freely elected as President of South Africa. In Portugal, he was greeted enthusiastically, as people embraced his testimony of the victory over oppression. Portugal had recently triumphed over its own oppression and had ended its colonial rule following the Carnation Revolution. Nelson Mandela saluted that revolution, stating that it was also an inspiration for people that remained predominantly repressed.

At the same time, he spoke to more than half a million Portuguese of the consolidation, peace and integration of the future South Africa. That was Nelson Mandela in all his courage, in his humanity, in his intelligence, in the simplicity of his compassion, in his greatness of soul and in his long road to freedom. It was that inspiration that prevailed in resolving crises such as that in Timor-Leste.

He showed the world that it is always worth trying and that nothing is impossible; that in our personal battles, we are capable of conquering fear with hope and can overcome hatred with love and forgiveness.

That is why Mandela's legacy must be supported and why Portugal supports the Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace 2019-2028. I salute those awarded the United Nations Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela Prize: the former President of Portugal, Jorge Sampaio, and Dr. Helena Ndume of Namibia, for their work on youth, the future and education, particularly in critical areas.

The legacy of Mandela, aligned with the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, leads us to believe that we can and must invest in the future, not only through declarations, which are fundamental, and not only through words, but through hard work and in such a way that the world itself may become a better place — a peaceful place where no one is left behind. Nelson Mandela was not only an exceptional man, he was clearly one of the greatest of us all.

The Acting President: The Assembly will how hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Juan Carlos Varela Rodríguez, President of the Republic of Panama.

President Varela Rodríguez (*spoke in Spanish*): In commemorating the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela, we must speak of his legacy, which is nothing less than a commitment to overcoming social inequality and racial discrimination at the global level. We must recognize his dedication to the service of humankind, his humanitarian vocation and his tireless efforts to promote and protect human rights, reconciliation, solidarity and democracy. He was a promoter of the culture of peace, to which he devoted his life.

Mandela continues to be a source of inspiration and an example of courage and compassion for all, embodying the values and essence that should guide the Organization. As he once stated, our greatest weapon, which the enemy can never resist, is peace. As a multi-ethnic and multicultural country that respects diversity and tolerance, Panama staunchly believes that countries should gear their capacities towards solving the problems that life brings, rather than those that we create for ourselves.

At the current global juncture, in which war and conflicts are the main causes of mass migrations — to the grief and pain of which Panama has borne witness — it is imperative to champion and strengthen the principles of non-violence. Having partnered to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, my country today renews its commitment to national, regional and global actions for the promotion of peace, as we firmly believe that they are essential to achieving the other development goals.

Likewise, we recognize the role that young people can and must play in the prevention of conflicts, violence and even in the consolidation of peace processes, for which we note the value and obligation of paving the way to promote their inclusion and active participation. In welcoming the Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace 2019-2028, Panama renews its commitment to actively and constructively contribute to the global peace agenda and to maximize the scope of our collective efforts as an essential tool for a more peaceful and prosperous world.

The Acting President: The Assembly will how hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Tommy Esang Remengesau Jr., President of the Republic of Palau.

President Remengesau: Today, we honour the legacy of a great leader and great humanitarian, Mr. Nelson Mandela, as we carry on his work to promote peace, eliminate the weapons of war and repair the damage of colonial legacies through reconciliation and racial and gender equality. Palau is still grappling with its own history of being colonized by several major Powers. Our matrilineal system of governance had served us well, with our people living sustainably for thousands of years. Land and resources were managed through clan- and village-based systems without the need for private property. Cooperative work arrangements were the norm.

Foreign Powers attempted to impose their modern concepts of order and commerce, which forced us to integrate traditional systems into an uneasy hybrid. We have seen first-hand the turmoil of the world's imperial legacies. The forced transition ignited bitter power struggles that sometimes erupted into violence previously unseen in our country. Those new systems, initially understood by few Palauans, left us open to exploitation by those with the knowledge and the money. Palauans are very adaptive people, however, and so we have done our best to navigate this difficult period of our history without sacrificing the values that make our islands such a special place. The protection of our local environment remains a guiding principle, despite the pressures of a global economy that would monetize our natural spaces for short-term gain.

Mr. Gertze (Namibia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The Pacific region also has a painful history with weapons of war. More than 2,000 nuclear tests have touched peoples and communities in many regions, including in the Pacific. Nuclear tests have negatively impacted the environment, human health, food security and economic development. Weapons of mass destruction have no place in this world, and we urge the achievement of the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantling of such weapons and ballistic missiles of all ranges. We remain committed to the need to ensure that nuclear weapons are never used again.

The greatest tribute we can pay to the great Madiba is to carry on his legacy with the same single-minded purpose that defined his life, first as a revolutionary in his own country and then as a revered global statesman. "May your choices reflect your hopes, not your fears", as he once said. That should be our mantra as we all strive to follow his example.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Ilir Meta, President of the Republic of Albania.

President Meta: I would like to join previous speakers in welcoming the adoption of the political declaration (resolution 73/1). I also congratulate the organizers and co-facilitators for convening the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit and reminding us of the image of the man who inspired the whole world with his commitment to peace and reconciliation, as well as his dedication and persistence in fighting and protecting human rights.

In recognizing the period 2019-2028 as the Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace, we States Members of the United Nations commit ourselves to greater joint efforts and collectively hold ourselves accountable to the values and principles of that declaration. In Albania, we have had our own Mandelas who, for decades during the communist regime, were cruelly persecuted and deprived of their freedom and liberty because of their ideas and beliefs. However, they survived to tell us and encourage us to be more tolerant and respectful of each other's faith, beliefs and ethnicity. We should act and fight together for those values.

As we speak, there are many violent conflicts around the world, great potential for proxy warfare that must be prevented, and humanitarian crises to be confronted. There are many violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and our goal for global peace is yet to be achieved. In all those dimensions of volatility, there is a legacy of people who have been fighting for peace and of nations fighting for a peaceful future.

Today, we seek new ways to better promote sustaining peace and make the best use of prevention with a long-term perspective. In that respect, Albania considers that we need a whole-of-society approach, backed by strong institutions and the rule of law, human security, inclusive development and the full enjoyment of human rights for all. On the eve of the seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, I would like to highlight that human rights are a critical foundation for peace and that resilience is anchored in the synergies between fulfilling human rights and the peaceful coexistence of societies.

Given that human rights are universal, they constitute the backbone of our societies in building peace and guaranteeing security and stability. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its goal of fostering peaceful, just and inclusive societies leads us towards the promotion of prevention as a step towards the culture of peace and ensuring peaceful coexistence between nations, societies, communities and individuals.

The adoption of the Secretary-General's reforms on peace and security, which Albania supports, is a new approach to responding efficiently to fragile nations and vulnerable societies, preventing conflicts and building a more durable and just peace. I believe that fostering political dialogue and strengthening multilateralism are the best ways to promote rule-based global societies based on the values of human rights and respect for international law. To deny people their human rights is to challenge their very humanity, as Nelson Mandela taught us.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Borut Pahor, President of the Republic of Slovenia.

President Pahor: Nelson Mandela once said: "Negotiation and discussion are the greatest weapons we have for promoting peace". There is no better place to do that than the United Nations. We certainly have all the necessary tools, as set out in the Charter of the United Nations. The question is, however: Do we also have the political will?

The United Nations was established to save future generations from the tragedy of war by binding us in a rules-based order, with the United Nations Charter at its core. For the system to work, every Member State must abide by and defend the rules-based order prescribed by the Charter. That is not just a matter of political will; it is an actual legal obligation. I would now like to focus on four brief messages.

First, without respect for human rights, there can be no peace and security, nor can there be development. Violations and abuses of human rights continue in many parts of the world. Secondly, we need to think and rethink our approach to peace. First and foremost, we need to put more emphasis on preventing and addressing the root causes of conflict and instability. For that, Slovenia strongly supports the Secretary-General's efforts to reorient the international community's thinking on crisis and conflict prevention. In that context, mediation is a very important tool. Although every mediation situation is unique, the use of that instrument generates hope and the possibility of peaceful solutions to conflicts.

The third message is accountability and the final message, which is very important, is reconciliation. I think that is the legacy of Nelson Mandela. There are many people who are capable of revenge, but not many who can forgive. Nothing is more inspiring than the power of forgiveness. After all, I think Mandela gives us hope that even the impossible is possible. The essential point of his legacy is that important issue of reconciliation. Long live Madiba.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, President of the Republic of Mali.

President Keita (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I welcome the initiative of convening the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit to celebrate the life of an exceptional man that is full of lessons for current and future generations. I am deeply moved by the wealth of testimony for the most illustrious of political prisoners of the twentieth century. The late President Madiba spent 27 consecutive years of his life in prison as a class D prisoner — the lowest class — from his registration in 1964 as prisoner number 466/64 at Robben Island prison.

One needs to have visited Robben Island — to have been in the prison cell where Madiba spent those 27 years and seen the tiny bed on which he had to squeeze his substantial body for 27 years. One can only imagine the damage that inflicted on his knees and legs. We witnessed his journey of shame; we saw his suffering; we saw how our brother was dehumanized. And yet, it made him even stronger. Why did Madiba make that sacrifice? It was for the noble cause of the triumph of freedom, peace, equality, justice, solidarity and tolerance. Upon his release, Nelson Mandela was able to give all of humankind a great lesson in forgiveness, reconciliation and unity by launching the concept of the rainbow nation in South Africa.

I still remember that, when he was elected President of his country in the post-apartheid era, President Mandela made an appeal at his inauguration to the South African people for unity of action: "None of us acting alone can achieve success". That call remains relevant today if we want to promote world peace, respect for human rights and inclusive development.

For its part, Mali supported the legitimate fight of Nelson Mandela. In April 1962, Madiba led a delegation of the African National Congress to Mali and approached Modibo Keita, requesting the support of our people in the struggle against apartheid. When Oliver Tambo described the purpose of their visit, Modibo replied:

> "If you, our brothers of Azania, had not risen to fight back against the inhuman conditions that have been imposed on you, I, Modibo Keita, would have found you unworthy of Chaka."

I was Prime Minister of Mali when Madiba returned to our country at the invitation of President Alpha Oumar Konaré, and we welcomed him in a way that was worthy of his struggle and status, but he demonstrated great modesty and care for others during his visit. For me, during the two days that I was in his company, I was struck by his humility and the greatness of his soul. Today, I am here on behalf of my country to pay a deserved tribute to him, not only out of routine, but out of a duty of the heart, a duty of dignity, and a duty of gratitude to one of the most deserving Africans of this and the previous century.

Mali fully endorses the political declaration (resolution 73/1) adopted at this Summit. I conclude by paying a warm tribute to the life and work of the great Nobel Peace Prize winner. May his example continue to inspire us to build and consolidate peace throughout the world.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Teodoro

Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, President of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea.

President Obiang Nguema Mbasogo (*spoke in Spanish*): We are here today to remember and commemorate the personal character and legacy of that illustrious son of Africa, Nelson Mandela, as we celebrate the centenary of his birth. The greatness of his character is highlighted by the fact that, a century after his birth, his example, his teachings and his life testimony remain relevant in a world that continues to suffer injustices, wars, conflicts, discrimination, jealousy and crimes of every kind against humanity.

Recalling Mandela's personal characteristics should lead us to reflect deeply on where we are taking the world and what legacy we will leave our children. Mandela's teachings are valid not only for us Africans. Rather, they should serve as an inspiration and example for all human beings who strive to make this world a better place to live.

His vision is a guide to overcoming the many obstacles and limitations that some humans impose on others, as was the case in the apartheid regime of South Africa and in global colonialism. Indeed, Mandela represents an example and hope for peoples that are still struggling to achieve equality and integration. Despite having been unjustly deprived of his liberty for 27 years, he was capable of overcoming his imprisonment to come to live with and forgive his tormentors.

Mandela's thought has been incorporated by the Organization in order to build a new world of human society. As former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said in July 2009,

> "Nelson Mandela is the living incarnation of the values that the United Nations represents".

We in Equatorial Guinea, we have drawn inspiration from the Mandela legacy in many of the actions we have undertaken to secure and maintain harmonious coexistence among the people of Equatorial Guinea and to achieve the economic development and well-being of our country. It is timely that we have gathered here at the beginning of the general debate of the General Assembly at its seventy-third session in order to celebrate the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit. We hope that the spirit of Mandela will guide our thoughts and actions in order to make our Organization and the entire world a place that this worthy son of Africa would have dreamed of. We hope that this session will enable us to embark upon a new era in international relations and coexistence among the peoples imbued with Mandela's spirit.

We subscribe to the political declaration adopted at the opening of the Peace Summit (resolution 73/1).

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Azali Assoumani, President of the Union of Comoros.

President Assoumani (*spoke in French*): A few days after the moving tribute to the late Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the United Nations is commemorating the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela, a son of Africa who has left humankind an exceptional legacy. Each of those persons, in his own way and on his own journey, is celebrated by us for several reasons, particularly for their unique contribution to all nations and people working for the maintenance of peace. This Peace Summit in honour of the late Nelson Mandela, pursuant to resolution 72/243, of 22 December 2017, is a worthy tribute to a man who sacrificed a quarter of his long life to the fight for the emancipation of his people, and of Africa in general, and against colonialism and imperialism through his categorical rejection of racism and its institutionalized form — apartheid.

That fight, however, had an impact far beyond the African continent. He was a charismatic leader who was ready to sacrifice his life to that noble cause. He was as firmly opposed to white domination, a legacy of the slave mentality, as he was to the prospect of black domination, which would have been vindictive. In that context, after having lived through South Africa's attempt to deny a people's humanity through segregation, Mandela embodied what Albert Einstein, speaking of Gandhi, which was that

> "generations to come ... will scarcely believe that such a one as this walked the Earth in flesh and blood."

Considering the plight of powerless minorities worldwide and the persistence of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, among so many other factors that fuel threats to global peace, paying tribute to Mandela is also needed, and perhaps above all, in order to perpetuate the memory of a man who, after having been subjected to the worst hardships and frustrations and condemned to life imprisonment with his peers, never stopped dreaming that one day he and his countrymen would build a rainbow nation reflecting the history of the South African people.

Forgiveness was instituted as a governing method through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and that strategy is already a watermark of the negotiations among the South African people. It has led to the results we know well, with Mandela being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize jointly with former President Frederik de Klerk, as had been the case with the historic Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat along with former Prime Minister Rabin and former Foreign Minister Shimon Peres.

Additionally, on behalf of the Union of Comoros, I would be remiss if I did not pay tribute to Mandela's personal contribution, on behalf of the African Union, to the settlement of the institutional and separatist crisis in Comoros in 1998.

We recognize Mandela's importance for global sustainable peace, especially in the face of the ugly and criminal face of international terrorism. The General Assembly adopted resolution 72/243 in 2017 with a view to holding this Summit, which highlights a unique person — a man who absolutely refused to be defeated and who was able to overcome all obstacles to come to understand that living and dying in peace meant recognizing the full humanity of the other.

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Arthur Peter Mutharika, President of the Republic of Malawi.

President Mutharika: One hundred years after his birth, it is proper to commemorate the legacy of Nelson Mandela and his role in global peace. The global peace agenda is at the very heart of Malawi's policies. Malawi is a peace-loving country. We are therefore committed to ensuring that there is total peace and tranquillity in the world. Every human being deserves to live in a peaceful environment with peace of mind. With our support, the African Union will carry out its Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by 2020. Malawi will always go out to defend peace wherever it is under threat. We will continue participating in peace-loving missions wherever duty calls us to do so. Malawi has moved to develop counter-terrorism legislation and is party to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention.

However, the United Nations would make more progress and do a better job of maintaining peace if it involved Africa in its decision-making processes. We therefore call upon the United Nations to expedite the debate on Security Council reform. We call upon the United Nations to adopt the African position in the Ezulwini Consensus. We call upon the United Nations to accommodate Africa with two permanent seats on the Security Council. As we celebrate the life of Nelson Mandela, I ask all of us to reflect on the role that Mandela played in peacebuilding. Let us reflect on the role Africa might play in the world today. The world needs Africa more than ever. Let us rise up and take our place in the global community.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission.

Mr. Juncker (European Union) (*spoke in French*): The great Nelson Mandela once said that "it always seems impossible until it is done". That is the most apt description of the performance of the founding fathers of the European Union, on behalf of whom it is my honour to address the General Assembly this morning.

The European Union was born of the will of those who, having returned from the fields of battle and concentration camps in 1945, turned the phrase "never again to war" into a reality by countering the force of weapons with the force of law, and the rejection of others with solidarity with others. The primary aim of the European Union has always been to be a force for peacekeeping. Its actions must extend far beyond the borders of Europe. Since it is our relentless obligation to assume our global responsibilities, we must have a presence in the world.

Since the world belongs to us all, not just a few, and all peoples have the right to same dignity, multilateralism will always be the guiding principle of our global action. There is no happy unilateralism or protectionism. The world must become more open. It needs cooperation, rules and principles to resolve conflicts, to eradicate poverty, to reduce inequality, to develop free and fair trade that will create jobs and new opportunities for all and to preserve our planet — the indivisible heritage of all humankind.

Our shared rules, agreed freely by each of us, do not limit us. On the contrary, they free us from the law of the jungle and render each of us stronger. We should also enhance our respect for our multilateral institutions, which are certainly not perfect, but that is no reason to call them into question or withdraw from them. Rather, we should pool our efforts to reform them, modernize them and breathe new life into them. That is what we should do with the United Nations, the keystone of multilateralism and the guarantor of peace and the world order. My friend António Guterres knows that he can count on the full support of the European Union for completing the reform of the Organization so that its functions and ambitions are adapted to our twenty-first century world.

Tomorrow, like today, the European Union will continue to assume its responsibilities in the efforts to achieve the great aims of the United Nations, support of which is more critical than ever. I am referring particularly to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to which we have contributed significantly and which requires the mobilization of all of our policies and financial means.

It is a unique privilege and lasting inspiration to have been able to meet Mandela. His words continue to resonate within me today. He came from a cousin continent — a young, noble and promising continent. Africa is linked to Europe through our shared destiny. It is a neighbour with whom we wish to forge ever-stronger ties. An alliance among our continents — among equals — is the only way forward because the fate of millions of men, women and children depends on our joint efforts.

I believe that the best way we can pay tribute to Mandela is to follow his path for the future and for hope — a path of permanent dialogue among continents and civilizations, of the inseparable freedom of a globalized human family, of love for others.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Jusuf Kalla, Vice-President of the Republic of Indonesia.

Mr. Kalla (Indonesia): Today we celebrate the legacy of the late President Nelson Mandela and the many ways in which he continues to inspire us — not only his fellow South Africans, but also people from various corners of the world. I was fortunate to meet him in 2003. I remember him as a person with a calm character — a modest figure, but with strong convictions. I also remember fondly his beloved, colourful batik shirt, which reflected his vibrant spirit.

Nelson Mandela taught us the values of justice and reconciliation. His struggle against apartheid showed us what it means to free ourselves from discrimination and to respect human rights and dignity, regardless of the differences in our skin colour, faith, nationality or social status. Those are values that transcend borders. Democracy will succeed when there is peace, respect for differences and tolerance. Peace and stability are important preconditions for progress and development.

I am a believer in the value of reconciliation. One example is how well the reconciliation process has worked in Aceh. Peace in Aceh has allowed for steady economic development, and former rebels now hold important Government positions.

Justice and reconciliation were also sought at the regional and international levels. Indonesia's present-day relationship with Timor-Leste is a model for post-conflict relations based on those values. Our good-neighbourly relations continue to strengthen the forward-looking relationship between our two countries and peoples.

We understand that peace is a prerequisite for development and that development would be impossible or unsustainable without peace. In order for development to be sustainable, it must be fair, both within and among societies. Therefore, the United Nations and all its entities should continue to promote and ensure global peace, as well as equitable and sustainable development for all its Members. No one can be left behind.

We believe that a habit of dialogue nurtures a culture of peace. It underpins good relations among nations, tolerance among creeds and religions, and the alliance of civilizations. We also believe that dialogue can help tackle hate speech, radicalism and violent extremism.

Mr. Sánchez (Spain), Vice-President, took the Chair.

As a true partner for peace, Indonesia is committed to waging peace, which includes prevention, avoiding a relapse into conflict, and post-conflict peacebuilding. Let us take the life and legacy of Nelson Mandela as an example and set to work together on issues of common concern.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Epsy Campbell Barr, Vice-President of the Republic of Costa Rica.

Ms. Campbell Barr (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Nelson Mandela once said that he was just a common man who became a leader owing to extraordinary circumstances. That is the call that we make to those in leadership positions. Those are the words of one of the greatest leaders of our times, a man who transcended his circumstances and put the freedom of his people above his own freedom.

This Peace Summit is an extraordinary opportunity to pay tribute to Nelson Mandela. I welcome this meeting, as it allows States to consider the challenge of peace, as peace is the basis for ensuring the sustainable development of our societies. It is an opportunity, before the opening of the general debate of the General Assembly at its seventy-third session, to reflect upon and recognize the legacy of one of the most emblematic and important figures of our times and to reflect on the ideals upon which he based his life and which he so ardently defended. Mandela will always be a beacon for his courage and for his emotional and moral fortitude, and above all for the great challenges he faced owing to his convictions and in defence of his own principles. Those convictions must become our source of inspiration in our fight for a world of equality, freedom and equal opportunities for men and women, where there is neither racism nor discrimination.

The legacy of Nelson Mandela should become an even stronger foundation for building peace, dialogue and democracy, where national reconciliation and human rights are central elements. When peace breaks down in various parts of the world, we must strengthen multilateralism and follow the teachings of Nelson Mandela with regard to dialogue, negotiation, respect, humility and solidarity among peoples and nations. As peoples, as nations and as the international community, we must find the way to transcend our own circumstances so as to ensure the greatest good for our nations — as Mandela did — and build societies based on tolerance, reconciliation and dialogue. In that manner we can eliminate injustice, oppression, racism and discrimination.

Today we join in this celebration of Nelson Mandela's life and legacy with the hope that we can become living examples of his legacy. I make a call for peace so that our brother Republic of Nicaragua can create the necessary conditions to emerge from its crisis through respectful and tolerant dialogue and respect for the human rights of all people. It is our responsibility to bring about a just, free and peaceful world.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada.

Mr. Trudeau (Canada): Nelson Mandela's message of peace was rooted in the conviction that we are all part of the same community, that our fate is tied to that of our fellow citizens. He famously held that

> "to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others".

(*spoke in French*)

Named an honorary Canadian citizen in 2001, Nelson Mandela touched the lives of millions of people, transcending time and place. Our former Prime Ministers Mulroney and Clark are among the Canadians who were firmly opposed to the apartheid regime and pressured world leaders and leaders of multilateral organization to take the same stance. I also recall the deep impact that Mandela had on my father, who admired his character and his fight for peace. They spoke about those topics at length when they met in the 1990s.

(*spoke in English*)

From the dock of the defendant to the confines of Robben Island to the floor of the United Nations, Nelson Mandela always appealed to our common humanity. That must be the foundation of any lasting peace. One hundred years after his birth, it is fitting that Madiba be remembered here by leaders of all nations.

(*spoke in French*)

It is fitting that he be remembered by leaders who recognize that they share the same challenges and who, despite their differences, share the same hopes and dreams of peace, prosperity and possibilities for their citizens.

(*spoke in English*)

That is not to say that our solidarity is unquestioned or unshaken. Armed conflict, emerging threats and a changing climate have all tested the strength of our commitment and the bounds of our compassion. At times like these, we must remember the example of Nelson Mandela, who believed that we should not despair — for our troubles only bear witness to a job unfinished.

As we pay tribute to the legacy of Nelson Mandela, Canada reaffirms its resolve to push forward the work that he began. Canada will continue to call out the unfair treatment of racial and ethnic minorities, women and girls, and indigenous peoples. We will continue to speak up for the Rohingyan refugees, for the Yazidis of northern Iraq, and for the people of Venezuela. Canada will always stand tall for democracy, the rule of law and human rights at home and abroad. Peace is the work of many generations. Madiba took up the cause of peace, and it is now up to us to keep carrying the torch forward. The flames of his ideals must live on in each and every one of us.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Abdullah Abdullah, Chief Executive of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

Mr. Abdullah (Afghanistan): It is a distinct honour for me and the Afghan delegation to attend the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit today as we begin the work of the General Assembly at its seventy-third session. We are gathered here today to honour the centenary of the birth of the late Nelson Mandela, one of the world's most impressive and dedicated defenders of freedom, liberty and human rights, indeed a symbol of those values.

However, this Summit goes beyond remembrance and celebration. It is an occasion for addressing the real challenges and dire conditions faced by human beings who are being victimized in communities around the world. It is a reminder that we have not only moral and legal obligations to protect and defend, but also another opportunity to renew our commitment to peace, conflict prevention and resolution, reconciliation, non-discrimination and the protection and promotion of human rights. We are all painfully aware of the agony and injustice faced by millions around our planet, some as victims of indiscriminate violence, of which terrorism is one particular form.

I am here today representing a country and a society that has undergone almost 40 years of conflict and has suffered mainly as a result of external strife, primarily imposed on us against our people's majority will and wishes. Almost every theme and core issue addressed by the Summit matches conditions faced by Afghanistan and the impact that such conditions have had on three generations of Afghans.

It is therefore befitting and of critical importance to me and my compatriots to focus on concepts such as reconciliation aimed at attaining a just and comprehensive peace. The renewal of our commitment needs to go beyond rhetoric and empty pledges. We need to translate them into results-oriented engagement, dialogue, negotiations, strategy and policy changes and reforms that lead to sustainable and fair solutions. That is what we have aimed to do in Afghanistan for the past few years.

We value the steadfast resolve of our security forces to fight terrorism, as well as the general support of our international friends who stand by those shared goals. Our message has been clear: we will defend our country and our people's lives and rights as part of the constitutional order, but we stand ready to talk and negotiate with armed groups amenable to reconciliation, as well as with armed opposition forces that renounce violence and terror and believe in a united, democratic, peaceful and economically prosperous future.

I believe that this is the spirit conveyed by such inspiring global role models as Nelson Mandela, and I believe that it is part of the legacy that this body and each country carries as part of their commitments and responsibilities. I wish us success in bringing the vision for peace and human rights to life across the globe.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Boyko Borissov, Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria.

Mr. Borissov (Bulgaria) (*spoke in Bulgarian; English text provided by the delegation*): It is a great privilege for me to take part in this important event marking the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela. On behalf of the Government and the people of Bulgaria, as well as on my own behalf, let me express our sincere admiration for his legacy.

The challenges that we are all facing today demand that we never forget the values that Nelson Mandela avidly fought for, namely, peace, tolerance, democracy and respect for human rights for all. It is necessary to reaffirm the principles of multilateralism, as today's challenges can be overcome only if all countries work together.

Nelson Mandela taught us that the brave are not afraid to forgive in the name of peace. It is exactly that type of valour that we, the leaders of today, who have the task and bear the responsibility of making this world a better place, need to demonstrate — a world of shared opportunities, shared prosperity and shared responsibilities; a world in which all our differences coexist in harmony.

Nelson Mandela remains forever as a glowing symbol in human history of the drive of the peoples of Africa, as well as all other peoples around the world, for freedom, peace, development and prosperity. His cause provoked an avalanche of events and changes that led to the establishment of a new paradigm of thinking and relations based on the defence of human rights, together with the goal of ensuring social justice, development and reconciliation.

This remarkable anniversary compels me to share a few additional thoughts. When we talk about social justice and development here at the United Nations, we cannot but mention the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, which are universal in nature but closely interdependent, is the key to tackling the global challenges of today.

In the first half of this year, the Bulgarian presidency of the Council of the European Union made significant efforts to achieve progress and consensus among the member States on the main domains in this area. We are proud that, during that period, the mandate of the European Union for the commencement of negotiations for the conclusion of a new partnership agreement with the 79 countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific was endorsed. The negotiations aim to establish a modern and dynamic partnership with those countries as an important instrument for tackling global challenges, namely, the fight against poverty and inequality, and the nourishing of peace, security and sustainable growth for all.

This is also the place to take up the commitment to redoubling our efforts aimed at eliminating violence based on gender, religion or ethnicity, our struggle for the empowerment of women and youth, who are the future of our planet. Only by providing equal opportunities for all can prosperity be achieved.

As I pay my utmost respects to the political, human and spiritual legacy of the extraordinary Nelson Mandela, I would like to express my own highest regard and that of the people of Bulgaria for his ideals of freedom, equality and justice in relations among people around the world.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Nikol Pashinyan, Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia.

Mr. Pashinyan (Armenia): It is a great a honour to address the General Assembly on the occasion of the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit, which marks the centennial anniversary of that iconic political leader's birth. Mandela's image symbolizes peace and human dignity, while at the same time embodying the ideals of struggle and compassion. His name is deeply rooted in our collective memory as a pioneer in the fight against racism and discrimination and as a strong advocate for justice and equality.

It was only half a year ago that the people of Armenia rejected fear and injustice and took to the streets to protest for their fundamental rights, freedom and dignity. As dramatic events were unfolding in the streets of Yerevan, I was asked if I had a model of a leader who inspired me in my national striving for democracy and social justice, and my answer was: "Yes, there is such a leader, and that leader is Nelson Mandela". Having been a political prisoner myself, I closely followed the political and life story of that most famous political prisoner, who would in the end change his own country and the aspirations of millions of people worldwide. As Mandela said on one occasion,

> "I learned that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear".

Mandala's book *Long Walk to Freedom* was with me during my imprisonment. It influenced my conscience to a great extent and motivated me to embark upon my own long walk to freedom through imprisonment, persecution and the struggle against injustice throughout the towns and villages of my country. In the true spirit of Mandela's ideals, our movement became known to the world as the Armenian non-violent velvet revolution of love and solidarity. Now, months after our people's success, I stand here at the high rostrum of this Summit, as the Head of a modern Armenian Government, to celebrate the legacy of that great person, whose courage and determination serve as an example for others around the globe.

I come from a region where, unfortunately, bloody conflicts, corrupt systems of governance and animosity among people often overshadow wisdom and the need for peaceful coexistence. It is said that democracies do not wage war against one another, and I hope that one day our region's democratic development will rule out the risk of hostilities, wars and hatred. Armenia has firmly embarked upon that path and unwaveringly stands for regional peace, stability and reconciliation.

This Summit provides us with yet another opportunity to reflect upon the reasons that humankind is not yet immune to the scourge of discrimination, intolerance, xenophobia, persecution and crimes against humanity. The life and struggle of Nelson Mandela will stand as a true model of what should and can be done, as he preached that no one is born hating others, and if one can learn to hate, one can be taught to love. Therefore, the mission of the world's leaders is to learn and teach their people how to love. That will be the greatest tribute to Mandela's memory.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by Her Excellency Ms. Erna Solberg, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway.

Ms. Solberg (Norway): It is an honour for me to be here today to pay tribute to Nelson Mandela's vision and political leadership. I stand in this Hall as Prime Minister of Norway with the values that I express today on behalf of all five Nordic countries — Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

Mandela's dedication to peace, equality and justice has been an inspiration to the world. Nelson Mandela taught us two important lessons about sustainable peace: the importance of truth and reconciliation and the importance of inclusion. It has been 25 years since the Oslo Accords between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization were signed in Washington, D.C. The end of the Cold War had created new hope for the future. We saw an opportunity for the mediated resolution of armed conflicts. That marked the beginning of the Nordic engagement in conflict resolution. It has since become a cornerstone of Norwegian and Nordic foreign policy. For more than 25 years, all the Nordic countries have engaged in efforts to resolve conflicts around the world. We have learned an important lesson from that: negotiating a peace agreement is always difficult, but implementing an agreement is even harder. In fact, few peace agreements are ever fully implemented. Sixty per cent of all conflicts recur, and since the mid-1990s conflict recurrence has become more common than the onset of new conflicts. That means that the best way to prevent conflict is to ensure that peace is sustainable.

Conflict resolution is not a quick fix. It requires bold leadership from all the parties involved. During his Nobel Peace Prize lecture in Oslo, Nelson Mandela emphasized the importance of public participation in peace processes. That principle is just as important today, and a key component of public participation is the participation of women. Ownership is also vital to the sustainability of every peace process. Nelson Mandela also showed us that we cannot ignore the past; we have to confront it with the truth. Truth and reconciliation are key to ending conflict and preventing further conflict. Norway and the Nordic countries will continue to be inspired by Mandela's ideals in our peace efforts around the world, and we will continue to support the Secretary-General in his sustainable peace agenda and in efforts to ensure inclusive peace processes.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Joseph Muscat, Prime Minister of the Republic of Malta.

Mr. Muscat (Malta): It is a privilege to have the opportunity to celebrate the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela here with everyone today. We are paying tribute not only to a person, but also to the values that he embodied, that is, reconciliation over revenge, cooperation over conflict and hope over hate. It is in that spirit of cooperation that we must grapple with the emerging challenges that are already adding to existing economic pressures and political tensions worldwide. Whether with regard to climate change or migration, our ability to effect change will depend upon our capacity to mobilize our resources to address underlying causes. By shifting our efforts towards sustainable development, conflict resolution and peacebuilding, we can try to prevent wars and alleviate poverty, a blight that dispossesses millions of people. In the near future, shifts in the risk of extreme weather will become an additional factor that will compel people to flee their homes and abandon their communities.

My country, Malta, has always maintained that we are greater than the sum of our individual interests. Initiatives such as the Paris Agreement on Climate Change continue to provide reason for optimism. That strong sign of unity should also be visible in our approach to the exodus of refugees and migrants — a phenomenon that we need to manage. The European Union-Africa Valletta Summit reflected our commitment to a multilateral approach aimed at delivering a holistic plan. Going forward, our ability to strive towards the collective good will serve as a litmus test of our belief in the values of Nelson Mandela, which we are celebrating today.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Andrew Holness, Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, Economic Growth and Job Creation of Jamaica.

Mr. Holness (Jamaica): I commend the United Nations — the greatest global peace alliance — for convening the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit in commemoration of the centenary of that great man's birth.

Jamaica is proud of the strong leadership role that it played in driving efforts to dismantle the apartheid system in South Africa. Under that system, Nelson Mandela was unjustly incarcerated for 27 years, and millions of Africans were oppressed. We were the first country in the western hemisphere and the second in the world, together with India, to ban trade and travel with the racist regime. Jamaica's support for the fight against racial injustice in South Africa preceded the official advent of the apartheid system. Over many years, with support from countries all around the globe, many Jamaicans, including academics, politicians, clergy and iconic artists, such as our own reggae legend and freedom fighter Bob Marley, and people from all walks of life joined together in the clarion call "Free Mandela".

It is in that context that I am deeply honoured to participate in this Summit, which comes at a time of heightened global concern about hostility and conflict within some of our societies, with some regimes focused on the use of might rather than the protection of right. The centenary of Nelson Mandela's birth provides us with space as world leaders to affirm the need for healthy and meaningful dialogue to engender peace, reconciliation and communal accord. Those, I believe, are principles that Mandela would very much wish us to promote on this occasion. Admittedly, those goals are not easily achieved without significant sacrifice on the part of leaders. No one understood that better than Nelson Mandela. He asserted that real leaders must be ready to sacrifice all for the freedom of their people. That was his mantra and sacrifice, to which he held and which guided his actions. Nelson Mandela understood, however, throughout his long walk to freedom, that full freedom could be achieved only if he left bitterness behind. In that regard, he stated,

> "What counts is not the mere fact that we lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead".

Like Mandela, we too must commit to the consolidation of peaceful coalitions. What better occasion than this Summit to do just that? Let that be our legacy in his honour.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Jüri Ratas, Prime Minister of the Republic of Estonia.

Mr. Ratas (Estonia): It is my honour to speak here today about the legacy of Nelson Mandela and his outstanding service to humankind. That legacy is an example for all of us, as well as for future generations. His endless fight for peace, human rights and democracy permanently changed how we live today. His self-sacrificing aspirations for African freedom have inspired many. Nelson Mandela said that the sight of freedom looming on the horizon should encourage us to redouble our efforts.

Likewise, in 1990, Estonia was on the path to regain the most precious thing: its freedom. We sincerely appreciate Nelson Mandela's dedication to, and persistence in, bringing about freedom and justice, because Estonians know very well the price of peace and independence. We welcome the adoption of the Nelson Mandela political declaration (resolution 73/1), which calls for the Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace. That will take forward the work begun by the African Union under Nelson Mandela's decade of reconciliation in Africa. Peaceful solutions and preventive actions are the most effective way to avoid the escalation of disputes.

Estonia calls for the involvement of all actors, including women and young people, in resolving disputes in a peaceful manner. We find that reaching a peaceful outcome through negotiations and compromises is always the preferable path for achieving sustainable solutions. Estonia believes that every person in the world should live in dignity. We continue to promote freedom, equality and prosperity. However, we should be reminded that we are standing at a crossroads. Once again the disputes today and the challenges of past decades are threatening the world in which we live and our shared values. It is our decision as to which path we choose. The choice is between a world of alienation and hatred or one of unity and prosperity. Looking back at the lifelong struggle of Nelson Mandela, who provided an example for our own aspirations for independence, we should keep in mind that positive changes can never be taken for granted.

In conclusion, as part of the United Nations, we are reminded everyday of the importance of human rights as a bridge to freedom in providing us with a vision in our work for achieving justice, freedom and dignity.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Ralph E. Gonsalves, Prime Minister, Minister for Finance, the Public Service, National Security, Legal Affairs and Grenadines Affairs of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Mr. Gonsalves (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is situated in what has been called a zone of peace, and we owe our continued peaceful existence to a robust body of international law and the United Nations. But it was not always so. The genocide of all native peoples by the colonial Powers and the atrocity of slavery brought conflict to our idyllic shores, and today we continue to grapple with those legacies of colonialism. It is that very history, the human tragedy and the quest for the ennoblement of humankind that connects us to Nelson Mandela. In celebration of the centennial of his birth in July, my Government renamed the South Leeward Highway in Saint Vincent in his honour.

Mandela fought for all peoples, not just South Africans. He led his people's dismantling of the colonial pyramids of oppression and racism, and he led the African National Congress in its mission to end apartheid and establish an integrated nation of peace, justice, equality and democracy devoid of vengeful vendettas. There are attempts today to excise swaths of history from our collective memory and change the narrative after the fact to one of the alleged successful constructive engagements of yesteryear by the same Powers that labelled Mandela a terrorist. But they cannot do that. We remember.

Now the stone that those so-called builders rejected has become the cornerstone. We can now all gather at the United Nations, including the former naysayers, to recognize that peace icon together. Mandela's legacy tells us to stop grinding old axes and start creating alliances. He tells us that we might have been separated before, but now we are together. His life shows us how an enemy and so-called threat to global peace today can be a friend tomorrow. Mandela believed that there cannot be peace without equality. He stood up against unilateralism and nationalism in favour of dialogue. He told us that we must do more to live up to those ideals, which have been captured in the political declaration (resolution 73/1), which we adopted today. As we join in the universal remembrance of Nelson Mandela, 100 years after his birth, let us memorialize him with a renewed commitment to sustaining peace globally.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by Her Excellency Ms. Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister and Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, and National Security and Intelligence of New Zealand.

Ms. Ardern (New Zealand): I am honoured to be here to mark the legacy of Nelson Mandela and the 100th year since his birth. Nelson Mandela was a global icon for the fight for equality, freedom and human rights. Not only did he lead the struggle against apartheid and division, but he personified the values of forgiveness and reconciliation. When I say that his impact was global, I mean just that. Nelson Mandela had a profound impact on New Zealand. His struggle against apartheid was supported in New Zealand through a mass protest movement, which opposed sporting contacts between our countries, particularly the Springboks and the All Blacks, culminating in major protest events in the early 1980s.

My father missed my first birthday because of it. He was a policeman and was called upon to work during the protests that surrounded that tour. The 1981 Springbok tour protests were a lesson in solidarity and its impact. When Madiba visited New Zealand in 1995 as the elected President of South Africa, he described the news of the protest action in New Zealand in the 1980s as the sun coming out. I remember that 1995 visit, his dignity and his inspiration. Mandela was a living embodiment of United Nations values. It is those values and Mandela's moral example that we seek to promote in a world that is more fragmented and fractured than ever — an example that calls for justice, peace and forgiveness.

For many New Zealanders our most vivid memory of Mandela was his appearance on the field following South Africa's 1995 Rugby World Cup victory over New Zealand, while donning a Springbok jersey and presenting the trophy to the South African team captain. That was a seminal moment. If Mandela could make peace, so could the rest of South Africa. That one act of both triumph and reconciliation said much about who Nelson Mandela was, his capacity to forgive, his commitment to reconciliation and his ability to lead and inspire against all odds.

It is to those same values of promoting peace that we committed ourselves to when we signed the Charter of the United Nations. We collectively bound ourselves to the settlement of disputes and diplomacy. That means that, when we see a worsening security situation, we act. For too long the United Nations and the international community have waited to react. Instead, we must be proactive and place greater focus on conflict prevention. We must get better at identifying high-risk situations and warning signs before conflict begins. We must not be silent in the face of intolerance, hate and discrimination. We must speak for those who do not have a voice. We must pursue equal rights for all.

Let us today remember Mandela and the values he devoted his life to on his long walk to freedom, but let us also not forget the work that remains to be done. We must ensure that the just, peaceful, prosperous, democratic and inclusive world for which Mandela strove is fully realized. New Zealand's commitment to that work remains unwavering. Above all else, Madiba taught us that, whatever the issue — whether it concern racism, inequity or insurmountable differences — none of us is too small or too far away to be relevant in the collective struggle for justice. As we remember Madiba, my hope is that we all will give a reason for the sun to come out.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Mamuka Bakhtadze, Prime Minister of Georgia.

Mr. Bakhtadze (Georgia): It is an honour for me to be here today to address this audience. The centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela is a great opportunity to celebrate his great achievements, and, for most of us, it is an opportunity to reflect on the universal values of peace, humanity, diversity and reconciliation that guided him and inspired millions. We must admit that the world of today is falling increasingly behind in terms of adhering to Mandela's legacy. We continue to fall victim to unresolved armed conflicts, the threat of terrorism, grave human rights abuses and numerous forms of discrimination and inequality throughout the world. In these challenging times, our efforts should be directed towards investing in multilateralism, sustaining peace and building inclusive, diverse societies that stand on the pillars of democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

None cherish peace more than those who have experienced its absence. Peace in my country, Georgia, has been challenged by the ongoing conflict with the Russian Federation. That conflict, which dates back to the early 1990s, has affected hundreds of thousands of people, including those who had to flee their homes and remain unable to return, as well as those few who remain in the occupied territories and are sealed off from the rest of the world, while facing ethnic discrimination and grave human rights violations. In the twenty-first century, we continue to witness the installation of razor- and barbed-wire fences, which divide families and cut people off from their livelihoods. All of that sharply contrasts with the vision and ideals that Nelson Mandela fought for. Despite the existential challenges that we face today, our response to the aggression has involved constructive engagement and negotiations aimed at the peaceful resolution of the conflict. As Nelson Mandela said, "The common ground is greater and more enduring than the differences that divide".

We are determined to reach out to our fellow citizens residing on the other side of the occupation line and bridge the divides so as to build a common, prosperous future for our nation. With that in mind, in April, the Government of Georgia launched an important peace initiative, entitled "A step towards a better future". Through that initiative, we are taking concrete steps towards improving the humanitarian, social and economic conditions of the conflict-affected population.

It is time that we collectively raise our voices and join efforts aimed at restoring a rules-based order and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Those values cannot be taken for granted. We owe it to future generations to ensure that they live in peaceful and inclusive societies. Nelson Mandela's fight for progress, justice and equality should guide us on that road. As he once famously said, "It always seems impossible until it is done".

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Duško Marković, Prime Minister of Montenegro.

Mr. Marković (Montenegro) (*spoke in Montenegrin; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): It is a particular honour for me to be able to address the General Assembly at this Summit named after one of the genuine heroes of modern times. He was a man who faced some of the gravest challenges following the Second World War and yet found the required courage and wisdom to make the modern world a better place in which to live. By preserving the memory of the fearless spirit of Nelson Mandela — a unique symbol of the struggle against apartheid and discrimination — humankind is fulfilling its obligation to safeguard the future based on the foundations laid by Mandela in his committed struggle for the liberation and prosperity of South Africa, the modern culmination of which was based on values conducive to the prosperity of all of humankind. It is to those values in particular that we should dedicate ourselves in order to make the world a better place. The challenges of today's world are becoming increasingly complex, while bringing about divisions within it that could undermine the overall progress already made.

I believe that it is only through a joint and unified response and by reinforcing multilateralism, a synonym for agreement among peoples and nations, that we can ensure forward progress. In order to accomplish that goal, we need an efficient and effective United Nations that promotes the sacred values of human rights, equality and peace, thus serving as a stable anchor for all of our aspirations. Based on the foundation of Nelson Mandela's legacy, global differences and disparities can be transformed into an environment where civil values are preserved and cherished, enabling a better future for the generations to come.

The region that I come from is well known for a proverb that says that our region absorbs history. Unfortunately, we have witnessed many conflicts. But we in Montenegro have also managed to find the inner strength to overcome the consequences of lost years through mediation. Montenegro is one of six countries that emerged following the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia, and despite the challenges it has faced, it has preserved its internal stability.

We proudly point out that during the 1990s we opened our borders to hundreds of thousands of refugees and displaced persons, which was quite a natural choice for our multi-ethnic, multi-religious and tolerant community. Based on the foundation of intertwined religions, cultures and nations, we restored our independence precisely 109 years after our first peacekeeping mission. It is my particular honour today at the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit to have the opportunity to recall the Montenegrin soldiers who were deployed on the island of Crete to mediate between the Cretans and the Greeks on 11 January 1897, paving the way for the Blue Helmets of the United Nations. Those 70 soldiers and nine officers made our country proud for many years. My main reason for recalling this fact is to pay tribute to all the brave men and women who are today risking their lives under the blue flag of the United Nations in order to help others and in order to preserve the values that we promote here on the East River.

I thank the membership for this opportunity to convey the readiness of Montenegro to reaffirm its decision to continue to contribute to peace and equality among people. The best beacon on that road is the work of Nelson Mandela. That is why I would like to wrap up by expressing my utmost respect for his legacy. I believe that it will forever remain an inspiration for the current and future generations of the entire world.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama, Prime Minister and Minister for Itaukei Affairs, Sugar Industry and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Fiji.

Mr. Bainimarama (Fiji): Before I begin, I would like also to congratulate the representatives of South Africa and Ireland, Mr. Jerry Matjila and Ms. Geraldine Byrne Nason, and all our representatives for their commitment to this consultation process.

My fellow representatives have given full and inspiring accounts of the life of service that His Excellency Nelson Mandela lived and of the legacy that he bequeathed to humanity: one of tolerance, reconciliation, equality and kindness. As a political activist who went through 27 years of imprisonment, as a national leader, and finally as an international statesman, he held firmly to his principles and acted with supreme wisdom. Through his life and legacy, Madiba is an inspiration to all of us who strive to respect and protect the human rights of all people.

That legacy should mean a great deal to every person on our planet, but it holds a special meaning for the nation and the people that I lead. That is because, like South Africa, Fiji and the Fijian people suffered for decades under ethnicity-based political and cultural divisions that fuelled hatred and disunity among our communities. It is only in recent years that we have begun to shed that legacy and unshackle ourselves from our difficult history of ethnic division. We have done that through a strict and unrelenting adherence to the same principles for which Madiba so nobly sacrificed himself during his life in order to defend a commitment to equal opportunity, and common and equal citizenry. Those principles lie at the heart of Fiji's constitution. It is on that foundation that Fiji will realize its full potential as a nation. That is the late Nelson Mandela's enduring gift to our country. As such, it is with the greatest pride that I give my support to today's political declaration, a pride that I know is shared by the Fijian people, a people that stands together, united today like never before in our history.

The journey of human progress is unending. Yes, we still face a world afflicted by conflict, racism and intolerance. But Mandela showed us that we can always forge common ground, even in the bleakest of situations, and that we can always find understanding in the shared experiences of our common humanity. At home, abroad and in every encounter and exchange, we must engage with an open mind. We must strive for acceptance and understanding. We must also remain committed to peace and democratic ideas. That was Mandela's vision, and that is what is captured by the Mandela Declaration.

Sometimes we have to make sacrifices in order to forge enduring and just solutions to long-standing problems. Mandela knew that. In fact, that is how he lived his life. It is a truth that we in Fiji recognize as well. That is why thousands of brave Fijians have served on the front lines in conflict areas around the world as United Nations peacekeepers over the past 40 years. We are deeply proud of that legacy. We have been proud to make such a large commitment to global peace for a nation of our size and population. And we are equally proud to lead the world in confronting some of the greatest challenges facing humanity, such as climate change and the degradation of our oceans and seas. We have led those important campaigns as President of the 2017 United Nations Climate Change Conference and co-Chair of the Ocean Conference.

As part of our commitment to the global human family, we have built bridges between nations, State and local Governments, civil society, business leaders and ordinary citizens to overcome what differences we may have in order to realize common goals — a stated objective in the Declaration. In that way and in so many others, the Nelson Mandela political declaration and this Summit amplify our own national priorities and how we Fijians see ourselves in the world — as champions of peace, able and willing to forge bonds across the global stage and as committed partners in uplifting and protecting all people, irrespective of who they are or where they may come from.

With those few words, I am pleased to support todat's political declaration on behalf of Fiji and to give, along with other leaders here, my full support to ensuring that we build a better, more peaceful, more equal and more inclusive world — a world that lives up to the example of the great Nelson Mandela.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Thomas Motsoahae Thabane, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho.

Mr. Thabane (Lesotho): It is a great privilege for me to deliver remarks on this auspicious occasion marking the centenary of the birth of Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela. Indeed, it is befitting that this Summit is entitled the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit. The contribution of Nelson Mandela to peace, freedom, democracy, peaceful conflict resolution and the promotion of human rights is unparalleled. The peace that we enjoy today, in Africa and beyond, was earned through the sacrifices of brave and selfless men and women, including of course Nelson Mandela.

Nelson Mandela is undoubtedly one of the greatest leaders and statesmen of our time. I stand before this body today, bearing testimony, since my country had occasion to benefit from the wisdom of that great man in resolving our own internal conflicts. In 1998, when my country was in great turmoil and had plunged into internal strife, former President Mandela, through his unique and unifying leadership, skill and humanity, ably negotiated a breakthrough by way of a peace settlement amid very acrimonious disagreements.

We in Lesotho also witnessed at first hand the brutality and suffering that the black people of South Africa and their liberation leaders, including Nelson Mandela, went through under the apartheid yoke. It was through the leadership of former President Nelson Mandela and other revolutionary leaders that the people of South Africa remained hopeful in the face of despair, and of course ultimately they defeated the enemy.

Mandela lived a courageous life, epitomized by resilience, forgiveness and commitment to a cause bigger than himself. He was a giant who, all in the quest for peace, selflessly embraced challenges that seemed impossible to many. In the context of the struggle for liberation by the black people in South Africa, he had the following to say:

> "I cannot pinpoint a moment when I became politicized, but a steady accumulation of a thousand slights, a thousand indignities, a thousand unremembered moments produced in me... a rebelliousness, a desire to fight the system that imprisoned my people".

Today, we can speak of a free and democratic South Africa, thanks to the leadership of Nelson Mandela. Mandela, and other liberation fighters across the globe have done their part. However, there is still a lot more that needs to be done. Today, humankind is suffering from multidimensional crises, such as terrorism, the denial of human rights, economic intolerance, the oppression of the weak, and many others. All of those factors not only disturb the equilibrium of peace, but present an indictment of us all as leaders.

As we honour Madiba in this Summit, I challenge each of us to individually and collectively take a page from his life. Let us resolve to emulate and continue the legacy that he left by striving to have a positive effect on others around us. Let us embrace the values that he championed, which include economic development, the eradication of poverty and the struggle to create a better life for humankind. Our commitment should be to follow in his footsteps so as to make the world a place where we can all live in peace and harmony.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Antoni Martí Petit, Head of Government of the Principality of Andorra.

Mr. Martí Petit (Andorra) (*spoke in French*): For those of my generation who entered politics 25 or 30 years ago, President Mandela was always a model to be followed. He was a true pillar of an era marked by the processes of democratization, peace and optimism. Mandela, and like him Gandhi several decades previously, helped us to restore our confidence in humankind, the power of language, the struggle for peace and the ability to engender change. I am convinced that one of the key contributions of Nelson Mandela was to show us that peace should not remain a mere concept or an isolated one. In the strict sense of the term, peace is defined as the simple absence of violence. However, Peace with a capital "P" is far more than just an absence of violence. It means justice, reconciliation, inclusion and respect for human rights. Peace that is built on the basis of injustice, vengeance or exclusion cannot be true or sustainable peace.

The same goes for the concept of democracy. In a strict sense, it simply means the election of those who govern by the governed. But democracy in the broader sense also means justice, opportunities for all and respect for fundamental rights. One of the major problems that democratic regimes must face today is the fact that democracy is gradually moving away from the values that make it a more complete and stronger system. We are seeing non-liberal and authoritarian democracies appear across the world. Those are regimes in which those who govern are, to be sure, elected by the governed; however, there is a failure on the part of those who govern to respect the rights of those whom they govern. Mandela taught us that a peace that gives rise to exclusion or misery cannot be a real peace, and that an unfair or discriminatory democracy is not a true democracy. We must be able to apply the lessons of President Mandela to our efforts to build a fairer and more inclusive world, because what is necessary at the local level is also and perhaps even more necessary at the global level.

The Principality of Andorra is a country that has no army and that has enjoyed 740 years of peace and neutrality. We are a country with strong democratic roots. Like all free, democratic States, we must continue to work for inclusion, non-discrimination and justice. The Secretary-General knows that he can count on Andorra in the work of strengthening our commitment to achieving sustainable peace and preventing and resolving conflicts, while respecting international law and promoting human rights. The values of President Mandela are also the values of the United Nations; they are, therefore, also the values of the Principality of Andorra.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Hubert Alexander Minnis, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas.

Mr. Minnis (Bahamas): I wish to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit in support of global peace. Amid the wars, conflicts, violence, injustice, hunger and bitter hatreds that stalk the global commons today, we find hope in the commemoration of the centenary of the birth of a noble soul, whose witness to reconciliation and peace is an eternal wellspring for humanity.

Peace and justice are as indivisible as the bond of human dignity, which transcends race, creed, ethnicity and every circumstance of birth amid the exuberant diversity of humanity. In 1985, the Eighth Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting was held in the Bahamas, hosted by the late Prime Minister Sir Lynden Pindling, a leading figure in the struggle for equality and majority rule in the Bahamas. The meeting produced the Commonwealth Agreement on South Africa, also known as the Nassau Accord. The Nassau Accord pressed for the then Government of South Africa to enter into negotiations with the black majority to end apartheid. The Accord also called on South Africa to end the occupation of Namibia.

The struggle for peace and justice is universal. In 2014, Sir Arthur Foulkes, our then Head of State, penned a letter to the students of the Bahamas, in which he said that the attainment of majority rule was the second emancipation of the Bahamas in 1967:

> "That event removed the last psychological shackles from the minds of many; it shattered false notions of superiority or inferiority; it created the foundation upon which to build a society with opportunity for all; it unleashed the hitherto brutally suppressed but powerful entrepreneurial instincts of a people. It freed many Bahamians from the fear of one another because of differences of colour or ethnic origin."

As we reflect on the centenary of Nelson Mandela's birth, and the seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the most enduring witness and testimony that we may offer is in the extent of the courage we show, like that man of nobility and grace who was prepared to give his life in the service of humanity.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Alexis Tsipras, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic.

Mr. Tsipras (Greece): I come from a country far away from that of Nelson Mandela. Nevertheless, our civilization inspired the democratic ideals that he fought for and was ready to risk his life for. In the century that has passed, it was Nelson Mandela who inspired those democratic ideals and kept them alive under the most difficult conditions. Today, his vision and actions are more relevant than ever, as our efforts are facing existential challenges, namely, an increase in wars and conflicts, growing regional inequalities, a strengthening of racism and the emergence of religious fundamentalism.

The current state of affairs requires a leadership in the style of Mandela: a relentless fighter for independence, peace and human rights and, at the same time, a responsible leader and formidable diplomat who was ready to make the compromises necessary to ensure the achievement of those goals. I think that was his power. He was a fighter who had proved his commitment to the rights of his people as he rose from the radical left, engaged in the colonial struggle and endured the 27 years of his imprisonment. And yet he became a statesman who transformed his anger and conviction into an unmatchable energy aimed at reconciliation, unity and peace.

If we can learn how to hate, we can learn how to love, Mandela said. At a time when the political momentum is moving rapidly backwards, we must believe that we can turn things around. Social progress and peace are not givens. They are earned through struggle and compromise. My country, Greece, has gone through both over the past three difficult years. Now Greece is exiting economic programmes of austerity, while protecting the most vulnerable; consolidating citizenship rights for the children of migrants; reinforcing the rights of the Muslim minority; protecting the rights of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community; managing unprecedented refugee flows, while respecting human rights; and resolving such international differences as the name issue with our neighbour to the north, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

I believe strongly that whether we are talking about overcoming such conflicts as exist in Syria or the Palestinian issue, achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goals or supporting African development, Nelson Mandela's example should inspire us today to do much better at the national and international levels.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency

Mr. Carl Greenidge, Vice-President and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana.

Mr. Greenidge (Guyana): Guyana commends the organizing of the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit. The Summit provides the international community with an opportunity to reflect on global peace in tribute to the centennial celebration and legacy of the inimitable Nelson Mandela.

The central organizing objective of the United Nations, enshrined in its Charter, is that we the peoples resolve to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. It is therefore both timely and appropriate, as world leaders gather for the current session of the General Assembly and in the face of persistent and increasing challenges to our resolve to make the world a better place, that this Peace Summit has been convened as a fitting reminder and inspiration of our guiding pursuit.

It is clear, of course, that the peace that we seek together is more than the absence of war. It is premised on the security of people, the security of nation States and the building at all levels of frameworks and institutions, such as the United Nations, that will unremittingly pursue the realization of this objective. The life and work of Nelson Mandela provide stirring examples of all those dimensions. His experience as a political prisoner for many years made him a tireless champion for the fundamental rights and freedoms of people everywhere. Mandela's life was based on a profound certainty that there are no differences that justify discrimination, violence, abuse or oppression. Instead, he believed in a viable path of cohesion and unity. It is therefore no coincidence that the basic standards for the humane treatment of prisoners bears the name "the Mandela principles".

At the level of his country, Mandela led with integrity and dismantled structures that entrenched inequality. Beyond that he modelled and instituted a process of national reconciliation that set the parameters of cohesion, justice and development. As a leader of standing in the international community, he contributed to the building of global institutions through his dedication and his decision to advance the values and aspirations of the United Nations through the promotion of conflict resolution, human rights and equality. South Africa's decision to voluntarily relinquish nuclear weapons is one that has set a high bar of efficacious action in the pursuit of peace. Together, those contributions warrant a singular place for Nelson Mandela as one whose name can, with credit, bear the message of the commitment to peace. The designation of Nelson Mandela International Day is therefore a fitting reminder of his objective and ongoing work to achieve global peace.

Nelson Mandela has shown us that it is necessary for us to work for the peace that we want. Progress is not possible without sacrifice, patience, diligence and a broadness of spirit that embraces forgiveness, reconciliation and new beginnings. Furthermore, enlightened and determined actions are required from individuals, from nations and from us all together as an international community. In that regard we cannot rest while abuse, violence and discrimination are rampant. We must also eliminate the implements of warfare that cause suffering, insecurity and fear among the peoples of the world. Our efforts to eradicate poverty in all its forms and to empower men, women, young people and the marginalized to reach their full potential must be accelerated. Those are all dimensions and facets of our work for peace. For that reason, we reaffirm the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals, as a veritable mechanism to stimulate action in all areas in the cause of peace and to ensure that no one is left behind. In that regard, we share the view that there can be no peace without sustainable development and no sustainable development without peace.

Global peace is cast as an elusive dream far too often. And for many — and too often — it has and continues to be elusive. The life of Madiba provides persuasive confirmation of the efficacy of the contribution of consistent and principled efforts to the pursuit of peace at all levels. To that end, Guyana fully endorses the political declaration adopted by the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit and renews its commitment to the creation of a peaceful and cohesive society and a world in which peace and the pursuit thereof prevail.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now hear an address by Her Excellency Ms. Leona Marlin-Romeo, Prime Minister of Sint Maarten of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Ms. Marlin-Romero (Netherlands): Today I am truly grateful on this occasion to participate in this Peace Summit devoted to one of the most prominent revolutionary figures of our time, Nelson Mandela. Dedicating the 2019-2028 period to Nelson Mandela as affirmed in the political declaration (resolution 73/1) adopted today has great symbolic and inspirational value. Let me seize this opportunity to thank South Africa and Ireland for their valuable efforts in co-facilitating the drafting process. Today's global challenges and threats remind us that the world that Madiba hoped for, the world envisaged in the Charter of the United Nations, is still far from being a reality. We need to step up our efforts. As the Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza said, "peace is not the absence of war; it is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition of benevolence, confidence, justice".

Madiba already saw in political, social and economic exclusion key factors in igniting and perpetuating conflict. The peacebuilding and sustaining peace agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are the most comprehensive tools for achieving a sustainable, long-lasting peace that leaves no behind. Promoting and implementing them must be our priority. More inclusive societies, socioeconomic development and access to justice is what they envision, together with a key role for local leadership.

Madiba inspired us to aim for a world where, to use his own words,

> "colour, race and gender become only a God-given gift to each one of us and not an indelible mark or attribute that accords a special status to any".

Indeed, building an exclusive society where all its parts can actively participate and contribute, including women and youth, leads to stronger and more reliable institutions able to address people's needs and thus to prevent the outburst of conflict. Civil-society organizations and non-governmental organizations play a vital role in helping Governments to achieve this purpose.

Let me also share my country's experience. The Kingdom of the Netherlands comprises four countries: the Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten, and each relies on an inclusive approach to foster sustainable development and promote peace. The society we seek to create must be a people-centred society. All its institutions and its resources must be dedicated to the pursuit of a better life for all our citizens, as Mandela claimed.

Nelson Mandela embodies the values and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. We have a serious responsibility towards future generations, preserving his legacy and carrying on his hopes for a better, fairer world. Ensuring our people's fundamental human rights, the rule of law and human dignity is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace, values to which my country is staunchly committed.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Adel Ahmed Al-Jubeir, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

Mr. Al-Jubeir (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): I am pleased to stand before the General Assembly today on behalf of the League of Arab States and the country that served as President of the twenty-ninth Arab Summit, namely, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. We are here to participate in this Peace Summit, a summit bearing the name of a man who changed history through his tolerance, patience, and human qualities, despite the many years of pain, suffering and incarceration he endured as he fought for peace, security and development in South Africa and throughout the world.

That great man was born 100 years ago. He lived for peace which was his aim, and earned the appreciation and respect of the entire world.

The late President Nelson Mandela had strong historical links with the leadership of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries. He always supported the primary Arab and Muslim cause, namely, that of Palestine. He supported the right of the Palestinian people to their independent State within the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, in accordance with international laws, the relevant resolutions of international legitimacy and the Arab Peace Initiative. We will never forget his famous words when he said that the South African revolution will not achieve all its objectives until the Palestinian people enjoy their freedom.

The late President Mandela also supported several other Arab causes, and together with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, made contributions to resolving the Lockerbie issue, a rather thorny matter in 1999.

Social justice and the culture of peace and freedom were always the watchwords of Nelson Mandela. He provided inspiration to many people around the world. He made a major contribution to the promotion of peace, human rights and sustainable development, as well as a dignified life. Perhaps one of the most important lessons that we can learn from Nelson Mandela is to continue building and strengthening peace and security throughout the world in order to achieve well-being for our peoples, and to enjoy security, peace and prosperity by promoting peaceful coexistence among peoples and respecting the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries.

In conclusion, on behalf of my country, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the members of the League of Arab States, I would like to thank the United Nations for the efforts it has made, particularly in convening this Nelson Mandela Peace Summit, aimed at expressing loyalty and appreciation to a man who was a role model of patience, tolerance and humanity, as well as fighting poverty and racism. He worked for the achievement of peace, security and development in his country and throughout the world.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Didier Reynders, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign and European Affairs of the Kingdom of Belgium.

Mr. Reynders (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): To celebrate the centenary of the birth of the great man Nelson Mandela means taking the time to remember this simple truth: things always seem impossible, until they come true.

Pulling a country out of 50 years of a despicable apartheid regime was the work of a lifetime. It would probably have been easier to give up, or to give in to anger or violence. But Nelson Mandela never ceased to believe in people, in their capacity for humanity, dignity, solidarity and mutual respect. His struggle was based on the values of peace, democracy and reconciliation, which continue to inspire us on a daily basis. The legacy of Madiba should resonate all the more forcefully today, as our world is still prey to many violent conflicts and too many people, women and children, experience war, exile and poverty.

Belgium is one of the founding Members of the United Nations and also of the European Union. Our modern history is closely linked to the creation of multilateral institutions born after the Second World War. For centuries, my country was Europe's battlefield. But for the past 70 years, it has sat on an equal footing with its neighbours in international institutions. Multilateralism is an asset of our generation. In Belgium, it is now part of our political DNA.

Some say that our common institutions have become ineffective in solving the problems of our time. According to them, multilateralism has become an expression of our weakness. I do not subscribe to that view. Multilateralism is a form of wealth; indeed, it is a force. Multilateralism protects. It protects the weak, but it also protects the strong, because in our globalized world, no State is safe from the upheavals that shake our planet. None of us by ourselves has the solution to our challenges. Multilateralism is the possibility of a solution; it is an assurance that the rule of law prevails over the principle that "might is right".

In Belgium we became multilateralists out of necessity. Today we are even more convinced. We are firmly committed to those principles, and it is with constant and determined commitment that we put them into practice in our foreign policy.

Our upcoming participation in the Security Council will be in line with that approach: Belgium will be a reliable and predictable partner, always seeking to promote consensus, without, of course, giving up the values that we hold dear. Madiba said, "If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy. Then he becomes your partner". At all times during its mandate, Belgium will promote mutual understanding rather than punishment, consultation rather than confrontation, the force of law rather than the right to use force.

Belgium applauds the adoption of our political declaration (resolution 73/1) today. That is the best response that our community could provide to the temptations of national withdrawal. Our declaration gives us the strength to continue our efforts, and I pledge to the General Assembly that the declaration will form a pillar of our diplomacy for years to come.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Singapore, who will speak on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Mr. Balakrishnan (Singapore): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 10 States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and, of course, on behalf of my own tiny city-State, Singapore.

It is most timely that the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit has been convened during the high-level week of the United Nations General Assembly, as we commemorate the centenary of his birth. ASEAN endorses the political declaration adopted at the opening of the Peace Summit (resolution 73/1). Let me quote Mr. Mandela's own words. He said:

> "Action without vision is only passing time, vision without action is merely daydreaming, but vision with action can change the world."

I believe that all of us can agree that Mr. Mandela transformed his country, but he also changed the world.

South-East Asia and South Africa are geographically very far apart, but that distance has in no way lessened the impact that Mr. Mandela has had on ASEAN, both on our individual member States and on its membership as a regional grouping. The ideals embodied by Mr. Mandela — quiet dignity, extraordinary compassion and unflinching integrity — have inspired generations throughout our region.

Indeed, South-East Asia shares fond memories of Mr. Mandela. In 1997, he visited South-East Asia and, while in Singapore, met our founding Prime Minister, Mr. Lee Kuan Yew, and delivered the Singapore Lecture. Mr. Mandela spoke of coming to our region to rekindle old times and old relationships, and he urged us to forge strong multilateral ties. While in Indonesia, he stressed the need for unity in diversity and observed that both South Africa and South-East Asia had much to learn from each other, especially how we view diverse peoples and cultures as a source of strength for our communities and not as a source of division. More than two decades later, Mr. Mandela's message continues to resonate.

Throughout his life, Mr. Mandela was a champion for peace and reconciliation. Those ideals continue to resonate with us. Since the inception of ASEAN in 1967, we have worked to create a culture of dialogue, consensus and cooperation in order to support our common effort to achieve sustainable development for the betterment of the lives of all our peoples. Through an open, inclusive, ASEAN-led regional architecture, we have continued to engage all of the major countries in order to maintain peace, stability and prosperity throughout South-East Asia.

Let me conclude by expressing ASEAN's deep respect for his legacy — a legacy that has inspired, and continues to inspire, all of us in South-East Asia. We will do our best to emulate those ideals, to enhance our regional peace, security and prosperity, and to uphold the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Finally, we are reminded of Mr. Mandela's wise words:

> "What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead."

Long may the memory of Mr. Mandela remain strong in us. Along with all people all around the world, we in South-East Asia will not forget Mr. Mandela and his profound contributions to the international community.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Taro Kono, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan.

Mr. Kono (Japan): Mr. Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was a man of conviction, a promoter of reconciliation and a beacon of hope for the future. One hundred years ago, in 1918, a tireless fighter, a man who would change history, was born. In the following month, the Japanese Consulate was established in Cape Town; it was Japan's first official mission on the African continent. More than 70 years later, Mr. Mandela was at a reception hosted by Japan. It was his first appearance of that kind after his release in 1990.

Later that year, he was in Japan as the first African leader to address the Parliament of Japan. He stressed the need to unite not only South Africa but also the international community in order to solve the many problems caused by apartheid through negotiations and support the efforts by the people of South Africa by providing necessary resources. He once said,

> "An injury to one is an injury to all ... None of us acting alone can achieve success ... We must therefore act together as a united people, for national reconciliation, for nation-building, for the birth of a new world".

Mr. Mandela visited Japan three times. During those visits, he demonstrated strong interest in the history of Japan's development. That history would lead to the concept of human security, which is consistent with Mr. Mandela's convictions, as it is a people-centred, comprehensive and preventive approach that empowers vulnerable individuals. We think about how much hope we placed in Mr. Mandela for our future. However, his will and deeds indicate that it is in us that he placed his hope for the future. Japan has been committed to fulfilling the hope that Mr. Mandela placed in us.

Next year, Japan will host the seventh meeting of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 7), which was initiated a quarter-century ago. In preparation, Japan launched discussions with former African Presidents so as to gain insights into peace, security and stability in Africa. TICAD 7 will offer another important venue to promote peacebuilding based on African ownership and a broad partnership with the United Nations and other international bodies.

Now, 100 years after Mr. Mandela's birth and following the more than 70 years since the founding of the United Nations, we need to act more quickly and effectively for the benefit of all. To that end, the United Nations, including the Security Council, needs to be reformed, and Japan supports the Secretary-General's initiative to rebalance United Nations peace activities away from merely "reacting" towards "preventing".

Together with the international community, especially Africa, Japan will steadily continue to take steps toward making the world a better place, following the path that Mr. Mandela walked, which has now been passed on to each one of us. We will never forget Mr. Mandela's words. "It always seems impossible until it is done."

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Josep Borrell Fontelles, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Kingdom of Spain.

Mr. Borrell Fontelles (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is a singular honour for me to be here today at this Summit to commemorate the centenary of the great man that was Nelson Mandela, Madiba. On the 100th anniversary of his birth, we welcome this occasion to take stock of his legacy. To speak of him is to speak of hope, virtue, generosity and reconciliation. He taught us many things, including that to be free is to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others. His legacy needs to be remembered today to give it new life.

The political declaration that the 193 States adopted today in the General Assembly (resolution 73/1) shows that we are convinced and determined to fulfil that legacy, which places human dignity at the centre of our action. It is necessary to do so, as injustice and inequality persist. It seems that economic growth benefits only those who have the most. We are living through an identity crisis, which has made it difficult for us to remember who we are and that our traditions are threatened by globalization.

Madiba would have responded to such fears by restoring optimism, because when he was born, a war had ravaged the European continent, and, later, after another devastating war, the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Geneva Conventions and the rules of world trade were born, all with the aim of ensuring that human beings possess equal dignity and are free from fear and misery.

Then we saw the 1990s and following decades, where great strides were made — the International Criminal Court, the 2005 World Summit, the collective responsibility to protect, new advances in education, in gender equality, in access to water, education and health, and in the fight against discrimination. But there certainly remains a long way to go, and that is what we reaffirm today in our commitment embodied in today's political declaration. Yes, there are still enormous challenges. As Madiba told us:

> "After climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb."

The line of the horizon always seems to move away from us and behind each peak there seems to be another. To the sceptics, to those who are discouraged today, I can certainly draw their attention to a few things, namely, the Paris Conference on Climate Change; the historic march for women's equality, which flooded the streets of half the world, including in my country; and the global pacts on migration and refugees. We must continue along this path, and we applaud the decision to celebrate the centenary of Mandela's birth as an incentive for working together, an injection of optimism and a gesture of recognition for the immense value of his legacy.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Harriett Baldwin, Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Ms. Baldwin (United Kingdom): Today we mark 100 years since the birth of an individual whose name has become the byword for courage, compassion and moral strength. Nelson Mandela was a titan of our age, a symbol of hope, a true hero of the twentieth century. His legacy continues to resonate with those fighting for a better, fairer, more equal world.

I am delighted to offer the United Kingdom's full support for today's political declaration (resolution 73/1), as well as our appreciation for Nelson Mandela's achievements and our commitment to advancing the issues that he was so passionate about. Nelson Mandela spoke many times about the dehumanizing effect of poverty and the suffering of children deprived of adequate food, health care or education. He spoke of others deprived of their childhoods by conflict, and he reminded us that, under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, every person is entitled to equal rights and freedoms without distinction of any kind. He said that none of us should be satisfied or at peace if others were struggling for their very survival. He challenged us to work together and to do better.

This week, as we come together for the opening of the General Assembly at its seventy-third session, we have an opportunity through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Secretary-General's sustaining peace agenda to rise to Nelson Mandela's challenge. Together, we must do more to prevent conflict, end poverty and protect the planet, so that people everywhere can enjoy peace, security and prosperity. The United Kingdom restates our commitment to the 2030 Agenda, to sustaining peace and to promoting education for the 131 million girls worldwide who are missing out on school.

Mr. Tangara (Gambia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Nelson Mandela once said that "courage [is] not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it". Today, let us be inspired by his courage, his wisdom and his resilience. Let us work together in his name for peace, for human rights and for equality. Let us rise to his challenge and use his legacy to make the world a better place.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Juan Orlando Hernández Alvarado, President of the Republic of Honduras.

President Hernández Alvarado (*spoke in Spanish*): Today we applaud the General Assembly for recognizing and extol that extraordinary leader and bulwark of freedom and world peace, Nelson Mandela. However, I cannot fail to call for us, today and for the rest of this summit, not just to remember him, as he deserves, or to commemorate that great human being, but to truly honour his memory by following in his footsteps and, as he said so well, by beginning to do what seems impossible today. We cannot continue to have meetings, tracing the routes of what will, no doubt, lead us to build a fairer, more prosperous and freer world, without really taking the necessary steps and fulfilling the corresponding actions that would turn his dream into reality. In short, we need concrete actions that produce results.

Nelson Mandela has been an example to follow in my country, which has in recent years experienced political and social situations in which we have been called to enter into dialogue and show understanding, respect, forgiveness and reconciliation. It is not a simple task because, as the Nobel Peace Prize winner put it, "It is so easy to break down and destroy. The heroes are those who make peace and build". In that sense, Honduras recognizes that a country at peace is only possible with more and better opportunities for all, with better standards of living and higher levels of dignity for each person. That is why we have worked tirelessly to reduce the rates of violence and multidimensional poverty in our country.

Honduras has taken significant steps to strengthen the prevention of violence. It is clear that we still lack a great deal of what our citizens need. We have been mobilizing investment like never before in what are to become the solid bases of a new system of quality education and health. To give just one example, 40 per cent of the resources previously allocated to security as a special budget item will today become the fundamental basis for the prevention of violence, as these resources will be invested in quality education, keeping in mind that people are not free and will never enjoy peace without access to quality services.

On 20 August 2018, in Honduras, we created a special commission for transforming the health system, whose members we have entrusted to work to achieve such early victories as the provision of 100 per cent of supplies and medicines in hospitals, as well as the reduction of surgical delays and the time people have to wait for medical appointments. On 19 September 2018, we also took a historic step by forming a commission for world-class quality education to transform the educational model, but with the participation of various sectors of society, with the objective of providing an education that is valid and competitive.

In the fight against organized crime, which is a priority for our Government, it has become clear that the role played by criminal groups such as adult and youth gangs puts constraints on the State's efforts aimed at sustainable development. Above all, they have been the protagonists of the greatest tragedy in terms of the loss of human lives in the history of our Republic.

That is why I never tire of emphasizing this issue, and I take this opportunity to ask the General Assembly and the United Nations itself to recognize that, in the case of Honduras, gangs are also violating the fundamental rights of individuals. If that is not recognized, the international community would fail to understand a fundamental part of the problem that not only Honduras but also many other countries in the Central American region are facing. For that reason, we have requested the support of the United Nations to adopt a draft resolution recognizing and condemning such groups as armed non-State actors, and thereby promote international cooperation to combat them. To that end, we ask for the support of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and, at the same time, we ask the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Tegucigalpa to take on the problem.

In that regard, I cannot hold back my frustration when we meet in forums such as this one and express our most sincere desire to work together as teams in peacebuilding, but we lack the will and courage to make it a reality, to turn that desire into concrete results that will have an impact on the lives of our peoples. That same will and courage characterized and has led us today to remember Nelson Mandela as one of the greatest heroes of our history. Mandela mobilized the world and got it to recognize the problem in his country that his people were experiencing, and that is where the solution to the problem began.

That is why I now call on the United Nations to adopt, on our path towards the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the aforementioned draft resolution and recognize that the various gangs in Honduras are increasingly attacking freedoms, democracy, peace and, above all, the fundamental right to life of our peoples. Likewise, we call on developed countries to allocate more resources to cooperation and the transfer of knowledge and technologies to developing countries, resources other than earmarked for financing wars and preventing irregular migrations, because the latter could be translated into resources earmarked to help eradicate violence, promote peace, conserve the environment and invest in general economic growth, which is the way to radically attack the root causes of such problems as irregular migration. No citizen in the world is going to emigrate from his or her country if that country is peaceful and prosperous and offers opportunities.

Throughout this day we have listened and will continue to listen to the wise words of Nelson Mandela, and many of us will repeat the famous quotes that have urged the world to forgive, love and build. However, I would like to close my address with a quotation that is little known but that is undoubtedly very relevant today. Madiba said,

> "It is never my custom to use words lightly. If 27 years in prison have done anything to us, it was to use the silence of solitude to make us understand how precious words are and how real speech is in its impact on the way people live and die."

Let us not take lightly the words we have spoken and heard today and we will continue to hear. Let us not allow the words that make up the political declaration that we adopted today (resolution 73/1) to remain mere words on paper. Our peoples are troubled and frustrated, and rightly so. Let us give those words the weight they deserve, and let us live up to them with genuine resolve and courage in order to change the course of our history. It is in our hands whether people live or die, depending on how we use our words.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Nasser Bourita, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Kingdom of Morocco.

Mr. Bourita (Morocco) (*spoke in Arabic*): His Majesty King Mohammed VI has requested me to read out this royal message at this summit meeting honouring Nelson Mandela:

> "The late Nelson Mandela embodies above all such values as tolerance and humility. The world thinks highly and fondly of him because of his struggles. The world admires him for his strength of character, his concern for vulnerable people and his fight, which he waged throughout his life, against discrimination and inequality.
>
> "Madiba undoubtedly had an important Moroccan chapter in his rich life. He nourished sincere affection for my late father, His Majesty King Hassan II — may he rest in peace — whom he

held in high esteem. That affection was mutual. It stemmed from the unconditional support provided by Morocco to African liberation movements. That was a constant factor during the reign of my late grandfather, His Majesty King Mohammed V, and of my late father, His Majesty King Hassan II. Both of them welcomed all African liberation movements. When they sought help and support, they used the Kingdom as a military and political base.

"Between 1960 and 1962, Mandela lived in Morocco, where he received the Kingdom's support in his legitimate struggle. That continuous and multiform support during the years of struggle in South African included the training of African National Congress (ANC) members in the Oujda region, the provision of logistical and military assistance to the ANC, and support for the diplomatic activities led by Nelson Mandela's movement abroad.

"In reviewing those historical facts, we do not wish simply to remind everyone of Morocco's leading role in supporting Mandela but, rather, to underscore the convergence of our two courses of history and the sense of a common commitment that ought to continue today. In appreciation of that precious assistance, Nelson Mandela made it a point to come to Morocco in November 1994 to demonstrate his unflinching solidarity with the people of Morocco. On that occasion, he was decorated by His late Majesty King Hassan II — may he rest in peace — with the highest distinction in recognition of the exceptional struggle he had waged for equality and justice.

"Nelson Mandela embodied not only the struggle of an entire people, but also that of an entire continent: our Africa. He was an advocate for the principles of equity, probity and universal morality. He belonged to the category of African leaders who were committed to humanist values and lofty principles.

"His stance on the preservation of national sovereignty earned him the status of champion of peace and understanding between nations — a stance far removed from the vicissitudes, uncertainties and calculations of harmful divisions. To those who advocated separatism, Mandela responded by championing unity, for he understood that our continent's future development hinged on the territorial integrity of its States.

"Mandela, as a politician, was always characterized by sound thinking and judgments; his major decisions were never made hastily. Without a doubt, he incarnated a school of wisdom that his successors should now continue. The values that he embodied with unwavering courage are the very same ones to which we firmly adhere in Morocco. They are the guiding principles and vectors of my country's political and civic action in the Kingdom, across Africa and around our world.

"With his complete humility, he was a universal figure — larger than life — who embodied a particular vision of the world. That extraordinary man belongs indisputably to a category of universal people whose destiny has local, national, continental and global implications. Mandela belongs to all of us. He had a vision and values that we must uphold. He called upon us to transcend our divisions, whether political or economic.

"To grapple with the scourge of racism, he advocated liberation; to tackle partition, he championed unity; and to ward off the perils of fragmentation and marginalization, he opted for unification. He was a relentless advocate of progress and prosperity, instead of underdevelopment and isolation. Those are the virtues that he was keen to share in his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech. They represent the quintessence of his action in today's world.

"We find his absence so unbearable that we prefer to celebrate his birth — one of those births that are honoured worldwide. Another birth that humankind owes to Africa."

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Dato' Saifuddin Abdullah, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Malaysia.

Mr. Abdullah (Malaysia): Malaysia joins other speakers in commending the President for convening this landmark Nelson Mandela Peace Summit.

We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the representative of Singapore on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and the statement to be delivered by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

We commend the Permanent Representatives of South Africa and Ireland for facilitating the political declaration that was adopted this morning (resolution 73/1). The comprehensive, transparent and inclusive approach taken by the co-facilitators, as well as the flexibility shown by all delegations during the negotiations, surely befit the legacy of a great man for whom we are all gathered here today in commemoration.

Malaysia welcomes the political declaration honouring the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela. We remember him for his struggle and personal sacrifice in championing human rights for his people. We remember him for striving for global peace. It may not be overzealous to say that the world is also indebted to Mr. Mandela for his contribution to the struggle for democracy worldwide and the promotion of the culture of peace throughout the world.

We therefore join other Member States in paying tribute to Madiba for his qualities of humility, forgiveness and compassion; his values and dedication to the service of humankind; and the dignified role he played as a humanitarian in the fields of conflict resolution and reconciliation, disarmament, race relations, gender equality and the rights of children and other vulnerable groups. This Peace Summit also offers us the opportunity to revive the values for which Nelson Mandela stood.

In order for us to ensure lasting peace and prevent conflicts around the globe, Malaysia believes that we should shift our focus to how we think about conflicts and how we address and solve them. Sustaining peace initiatives must be built on a more coordinated, integrated and inclusive system-wide approach by all stakeholders, particularly United Nations bodies, regional and subregional organizations and civil-society organizations, including the participation of women and youth. We are also of the view that both sustaining peace efforts and the promotion of a culture of peace must be in line with the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, for example leaving no one behind.

In addition, Malaysia continues to reiterate the importance of addressing the root causes of conflicts; respecting national sovereignty and territorial integrity; confronting oppression; promoting good governance and the rule of law; eradicating poverty; promoting sustained economic growth; and improving intercultural understanding on the basis of mutual respect and acceptance.

When Nelson Mandela first visited Malaysia in 1990, he was keen to hear about our experiences in nation-building. Our country has recently concluded its fourteenth general elections, where, just as in the historic South African elections in 1994, a new Government has been empowered through the voice of the people.

Let me conclude by calling on all present here today to live up to Mandela's spirit by committing to the noble cause of peace, with the courage, determination and will for which we all remember him.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Péter Szijjártó, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary.

Mr. Szijjártó (Hungary): We appreciate the efforts put forth to convene this very important landmark meeting, especially under the current circumstances when a new world order is under construction. The new world order seeks essentially to oppose the new security threats to the entire world. I think that at a summit named after Nelson Mandela it is appropriate to speak about those new types of threats and their existence in areas of the world that have been considered supposedly safe in recent times. I would like to mention three factors that endanger international peace and stability.

First, there are massive flows of illegal migration, which the whole world has experienced recently, especially in Europe. We understand that uncontrolled massive flows of people offer terrorist organizations the opportunity to disperse their activists and terrorists throughout the world, thereby spreading the terror threat of terror worldwide, including in places previously untouched by that phenomenon, such as Europe.

That is why I believe that we must pool our efforts to tackle the root causes of illegal migration. We must stop the promotion of the violation of borders and provide the necessary assistance on the issue so that such problems are not imported into places where they had never existed before. We must reject any approach that suggests that migration is a fundamental human right, because that is not in line with international conventions.

Secondly, I would like to address the issue of national minorities worldwide. All of us, within the United Nations, must make clear that the rights of national minorities must be respected — a duty that falls to the United Nations. We have to make sure that there are consequences to bear whenever the rights of national minorities are violated. At such a summit, I believe that it is appropriate to say that we must see national minorities as sources of strength, cooperation and friendship between nations, and we must reject all approaches that suggest that they are a source of tension.

Thirdly, we must raise our voice in support of those religious groups all around the world that are suffering at the hands of regimes that do not take seriously the freedom of religion. We must speak up for Christian communities globally, since Christianity has become the most persecuted religion on Earth — something to which we must not turn a blind eye. We must put an end to hypocrisy and political correctness. We must pay due attention to the issue of the destiny of Christian communities all over the world. At the United Nations, we have the obligation to provide legal and security guarantees to Christian communities worldwide for their return to the homes they have fled in places where they had lived for centuries, or even for a millennium.

That is why we hope that the General Assembly will seriously take that into consideration and address the issue of persecuted Christians in the Middle East. We really hope that the General Assembly will espouse the view that religious and national minorities are a source of peace, stability and friendship, rather than of tension.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar.

Sheikh Al-Thani (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to express our appreciation for the convening of the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit to honour a hero who devoted his life to common human values. Today, that is what our world needs more than ever before. While the Summit is an opportunity to reflect upon the legacy of Nelson Mandela, what is said here also issues a message that reminds us of our responsibility not only as Member States but also as partners with shared values and a common destiny. That requires us to cooperate so as to achieve the goals of the United Nations, in line with the legacy of Nelson Mandela. Nelson Mandela shouldered the sufferings of his people, and he was always a hero for the most vulnerable segments of society. Accordingly, he became a symbol of freedom, justice, equality, human rights and peace.

The role of the United Nations in the promotion and maintenance of peace and security can benefit from Nelson Mandela's legacy only if we learn from the lessons he taught and assign priority to the lofty values that he defended, as well as renew our commitment to human rights and development for all. We must also prevent and peacefully resolve conflicts and achieve sustainable development.

Peace, for Nelson Mandela, was not only the absence of fighting but also an environment where everyone prospers, regardless of race, colour or beliefs. Those differences are elements that enrich humankind. Our diversity is a source of power and cannot cause divisions. We can achieve a lot through our common humanity.

As part of our joint efforts to achieve peace and end violations of international law, we must recall Nelson Mandela's affirmation of the United Nations role as a peacemaker in conflict resolution and its role in implementing measures to overcome threats to peace. He believed in our ability to change the world and make it a better place in which we are confident that we, as the international community, are capable of achieving the objectives of the United Nations — at the forefront of which are peace, human rights and respect for international law.

Nelson Mandela fought against injustice through his persistent belief in the rule of law and human dignity, and he was able to impose a common respect for such human values. He enjoyed the respect of his people and the world. He is a light for everyone to learn from, particularly those who violate international law. History will not forget the violators and perpetrators of crime. Nelson Mandela will remain a shining light and a force for justice, equality and peace.

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now hear an address by Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

Sheikh Hasina (Bangladesh): I thank the President for convening this Peace Summit on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Nelson Mandela. Nelson Mandela began his political life as a leader of his people in their fight against apartheid in South Africa. Later, with his sacrifice, dedication and compassion for people, he became the undisputed leader of humankind, with peace, freedom and unity as his lifelong mantra.

Peace is no longer simply the absence of war. In his definition of peace, Bangladesh's Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, standing before the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session in 1974, stated

> "Our total commitment to peace is born of the realization that only an environment of peace would enable us to... mobilize and concentrate all our energies and resources in combating the scourges of poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy and unemployment." (*A/PV.2243, para. 12*)

The vision of Bangabandhu to establish peace has guided us all along. We believe and practice friendship to all and malice towards none. We attach the highest priority to peace and development. Our investment in poverty alleviation, public health and education have enabled us to ensure the well-being of our people and reduce inequality. We have created opportunities for individuals using innovative means and have therefore established peace through socioeconomic development.

Our peacekeepers are saving lives and protecting peace in many parts of the world. We are working with the international community in sustaining peace through conflict prevention, development and the promotion of human rights. Bangladesh has introduced the culture of the peaceful resolution of conflicts into the General Assembly.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development encompasses all aspects of human development — from hunger to inequality. However, peace continues to elude us. Conflicts remain a formidable challenge today. Human rights and fundamental freedoms, which leaders like Mandela fought for, have yet to be truly realized. People in many parts of the world suffer from hunger and malnourishment. On the other hand, racism, populism and intolerance are on the rise. People face discrimination, forced displacement, torture and even genocide because of their ethnic and religious identity. In my own country, more than 1 million Rohingya have taken shelter to evade the atrocities in Myanmar.

Like Nelson Mandela, in 1971 Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman led us to liberate the Bengali nation from the oppressors. They both spent major parts of their lives in prison, fighting for the freedom of their people. Bangabandhu was sent to jail time and again for standing up for the freedom of people. While in prison, he wrote diaries, which have now been published as *The Unfinished Memoirs* and *Prison Diary*, in which he recorded his struggle for peace for his people. Under his leadership, we achieved Bangladesh.

As a tribute to the great leader Nelson Mandela, we are delighted to endorse the political declaration adopted at this Summit (resolution 73/1) to establish global peace.

To achieve our target for a peaceful future, we must commit to the following steps. First, we must settle all international disputes through peaceful means and prevent conflict in all circumstances. Secondly, we must strengthen cooperation to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Thirdly, we must promote tolerance, preserve diversity and protect religious and ethnic minorities from discrimination and exploitation. Fourthly, we must fight terrorism by stopping the flow of financing to terrorists, as well as the supply of arms to terrorists and their outfits. Fifthly, we must promote and protect human rights in all circumstances and nurture a culture of peace and non-violence.

Let me conclude by recalling Mandela's words:

> "As long as poverty, injustice and gross inequality persist in our world, none of us can truly rest".

Let us work together to achieve his dream.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Julius Maada Bio, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

President Bio: Today the Republic of Sierra Leone joins the States Members of the United Nations at this historic Summit to honour and celebrate the memory and legacy of Nelson Mandela. This year marks the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela. He was an African icon, but he belonged to the world. It is therefore most appropriate to celebrate and reflect, as we are now doing, on his life and times to promote his legacy at this Summit.

The Sierra Leone delegation is here today to declare that we salute all the values and principles that Nelson Mandela embodied and upheld. He left us his colossal presence and the indelible imprint of his words, such as:

> "It is so easy to break down and destroy. The heroes are those who make peace and build."

> "You can start changing our world for the better daily, no matter how small the action."

> "What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made in the

lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead."

Nelson Mandela was consistent and resilient. His was a fight for a just, peaceful, prosperous, democratic, fair, equitable and inclusive world. His promotion of peace, conflict prevention, reconciliation, unity, non-discrimination and the protection and promotion of human rights all give us reason to reflect. Are we living his legacy?

I implore all of us to leave this Hall today with a determination to uphold all the principles enshrined in the spirit and letter of the political declaration we adopted (resolution 73/1). We, the Sierra Leone delegation, reiterate our unwavering support for the Secretary-General's renewed focus on preventing conflicts and sustaining peace, and his establishment of the High-level Advisory Board for Mediation. That, we believe, will foster a culture of dialogue that will ultimately lead to the prevention of conflicts around the world.

Sierra Leone is already a strong supporter of and contributor to initiatives such as the Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies; the Global Alliance for Reporting Progress on Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies; and the Sustainable Development Goal 16+ Forum. All of those are clear manifestations of our respect for the principles and values outlined in the declaration.

Today our nation is at peace, which has been a long journey. Our nation's recent history has been forged from the embers of war and national epidemics. But like President Nelson Mandela, we have fashioned, out of the embers of bloody war and conflict and with the help of the world, a stable, peaceful and inclusive democracy. We have emerged much stronger each time that war, disease and natural disasters have threatened our very existence as a nation. Our peaceful democracy is testament to the power of our will and the magnanimity of the world. We have celebrated three peaceful political transitions and seamless transfers of political power.

The new direction of my Government is focused on building a just, peaceful, inclusive and fair Sierra Leone. Our nation is at peace. My Government will continue to open up democratic spaces and promote national conversations on consolidating peace in our nation. My Government will soon launch a presidential initiative that will convene a national conference on peacebuilding, diversity management and the rebuilding of national cohesion. As President Mandela showed us, we should get together, talk to one another, listen to one another and continue to consolidate the peace our nation enjoys. We will work with our Parliament to establish an independent commission for peace and national cohesion.

Sierra Leone believes that Madiba Mandela's legacy to all of us is great. It belongs to every one of us who is working for social justice, inclusion, peaceful coexistence and equality in Africa, Europe, Asia, the Americas and Australia. His legacy demonstrates that we should be bold and resolute and persevere in the struggle for peace, justice and inclusion. Only then can we fashion a future based on humanity.

Finally, let me end by saying that Sierra Leone recognizes and will continue to promote President Nelson Mandela's legacy. Sierra Leone therefore joins the consensus on today's declaration because we believe in the values and principles enshrined in it.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Aloysio Nunes, Minister for External Relations of the Federative Republic of Brazil.

Mr. Nunes (Brazil) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to express my thanks to my South African colleague for having proposed this conference to mark the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela. Mandela's legacy inspires us and brings us together, wherever we are across the world, and Brazil is no exception. We had the honour in recent days to host an exhibition on the life of Mandela at Brazil's External Relations headquarters in Brasilia, with the help of the Apartheid Museum. The exhibition bears witness to the life of Mandela — a life that was entirely devoted to affirming human dignity in South Africa and beyond.

The commemoration of the life of Nelson Mandela enables us to reiterate the fact that peace can be built only through dialogue and that it is possible to have dialogue thanks to our common humanity. The path is sometimes long, but resorting to violence cannot replace dialogue. South Africa, when it emerged from apartheid, was a deeply wounded society because of its divisions and the lack of links among the various groups that composed it. Mandela himself had been a victim of the cruelties imposed by that odious regime. He called upon his people to change that reality in order to make reconciliation possible. His dream brought together South Africans around a collective project based on democracy, human rights and development.

Nelson Mandela was the founding father of a great nation. In him one can also see the classical character of a man at the helm of the universal mission of peace. We can learn lessons from his efforts, which can guide us in facing the reality of our time. The peaceful tradition of my country, Brazil, enables us to make an important contribution to international peace and security. Brazil is proud to have been involved in the dialogue on peacebuilding that was led by the Secretary-General. We support the integrated strategies aimed at the prevention and resolution of conflict, as well as peacekeeping and peacebuilding. We are also of the view that international peace and security, development and human rights are closely intertwined and mutually reinforcing, without confusing the role and capacities of the pillars of the United Nations.

The declaration that we adopted today (resolution 73/1) reaffirms the primacy of dialogue as the only way to build sustainable peace. The declaration also renews our conviction of the value of the peaceful settlement of conflicts, as well as disarmament with a view to achieving the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. If we are to honour the memory of Nelson Mandela, we must remain fully committed to peace, despite the difficulties that we face along the way. Mandela challenged the simple opposition between realism and idealism. He said that things always seem impossible until they are done. It is that spirit that we must keep in mind as a source of inspiration.

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now hear an address by Mr. Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Independent State of Samoa.

Mr. Malielegaoi (Samoa): Today we come together as leaders and representatives of nations united by a common cause, namely, to celebrate and remember the legacy of Nelson Mandela — a truly selfless leader, whose life personified humility and forgiveness, and was underpinned by a dedication to service for humankind and the promotion of peace.

Our Summit is timely. It sends us all a resounding message that peace and harmony remain elusive. The world we live in is a war-torn tapestry of conflict-ridden countries; regions battered by climate change and marked by natural disasters, suffering from unshakeable poverty, discrimination and intolerance of diversity. Our efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will be an insurmountable task — even with the best of will and intentions — if we do not commit ourselves to resolving these conflicts and create conditions conducive to sustaining peace.

As leaders, our ultimate goal and responsibility are the promotion of a peaceful and prosperous world, coexisting without fear of being different or suffering as a consequence of such differences. These aspirations are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations — our Organization, whose primary purpose is to maintain international peace and security. These aspirations are woven into our 2030 Agenda. Sustainable Development Goal 16 requires us to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development. This noble aim was long recognized, as reaffirmed in the purposes and principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which marks its seventieth anniversary this year.

Living together in peace is about bridging gender inequality, and I highlight the important role of women, youth and children as agents of peace, recognizing their significant contributions to sustainable development and peace. Peace starts at home, and women must be free from gender-based violence. As wives, mothers and sisters, women play an indispensable role in teaching, nurturing and inculcating the values of peace at home.

Peace and development are inseparable and indivisible. I will strongly reaffirm that, without peace, there is no development; and without development, there is no peace. Today we acknowledge the importance of transforming our world by achieving the 2030 Agenda, which we designed to create a peaceful and prosperous society.

Living together in peace means a society that works together in constructing partnerships to foster a culture of peace so that our global family can succeed in our collective aspiration towards eradicating poverty so that no one is left behind. We can attain global peace through cooperation, mediation and dialogue. We can begin by pursuing global understanding and respect throughout all generations to come. After all, Nelson Mandela steadfastly believed that peace is the greatest weapon for development that any person can have.

The Acting President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Abdelkader Messahel, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria.

Mr. Messahel (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): It is a great honour for me to address the General Assembly at this historic Summit, marking the centennial celebration of the African icon Nelson Mandela.

Nelson Mandela, a symbol of the struggle against apartheid in South Africa and a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, dedicated his life to the just cause of his people, to which devoted himself tirelessly on the remarkable journey he undertook with humility. As President Abdelaziz Bouteflika has said,

> "Nelson Mandela is integral to the history of South Africa, embodying its long struggle for freedom and dignity. His fight against the apartheid system and to rehabilitate human beings in all their dignity inspired the Algerian people in their own fight."

Nelson Mandela was a faithful friend of Algeria and is part and parcel of our history. It is with great pride that I recall Mandela's declaration that the National Liberation Army and the Algerian people had inspired his struggle for freedom and that Algeria, which made him a man, was like a second home to him. Representatives will certainly recall that the United Nations membership of the apartheid regime was suspended during the course of the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly, under the presidency of Algeria's President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, the Minister for Foreign Affairs at that time, and the African National Congress was accorded the status of observer to the United Nations through what is known as the Bouteflika ruling.

Above and beyond his belonging to Africa, whose virtues, humanist values and pan-African ideals he embodied, Nelson Mandela was an exemplary champion of human rights and the rights of peoples to self-determination, which is a key driving force for the prevalence of peace and freedom throughout the world. His work to promote reconciliation, gender equality, the rights of children and other persons in vulnerable situations, and the defence of poor and underdeveloped communities will remain rooted in the history of humankind and an inspiration to the United Nations.

Today's commemoration must therefore pay tribute to Mandela's long political struggle for the right of peoples to self-determination. We welcome the proclamation of the period 2019-2028 as the Nelson Mandela Peace Decade, and we endorse the call on all Member States to redouble their efforts to guarantee international peace, security, development and human rights over the course of the Decade.

I conclude by saying that it is incumbent upon all of us to make Mandela's rainbow dream a reality that will allow us all to express our profound desire to live and act together, united by our differences and diversity, in order to build a sustainable world based on peace, solidarity and harmony. It is precisely that desire that underpinned the initiative launched by Algeria and other African countries here a year ago to proclaim 16 May each year the International Day of Living Together in Peace.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Sidiki Kaba, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Senegalese Abroad of the Republic of Senegal.

Mr. Kaba (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): It is a great honour and a privilege for me to represent the President of the Republic of Senegal, His Excellency Mr. Macky Sall, at this important Summit, which exalts our shared universal values as embodied by one of the most illustrious men in history, President Nelson Mandela. Through this Summit, we are reaffirming our common devotion to President Mandela, who, through his commitment to and struggle for human dignity, made his mark on history and remains a model for our future. In a world constantly seeking meaning, there is no opportunity more fitting than the centenary of Mandela's birth for us to dwell on his exceptional and multidimensional legacy as an inexhaustible source of inspiration for us to find answers to the multiple challenges we currently face in bringing peace, justice and prosperity to our world.

Another happy coincidence is the seventieth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, whose founding principles enshrine freedom and equal dignity among human beings. Indeed, conflicts between nations have declined considerably and the world has become more prosperous. Hope has been further heightened by the ongoing implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

However, more than seven decades after the establishment of the United Nations, the international community continues to face unprecedented perils that hinder peace and security at a time when multilateralism is under severe strain. These political, security and socioeconomic challenges include, inter alia, poverty and exclusion, violent extremism and terrorism, illicit trafficking and the rise of nationalism, intolerance and racism. These acutely affect young people and women, especially in Africa. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains unresolved, despite the clear parameters set by the international community to that end.

Therefore, the teachings of President Mandela — focusing on dialogue, consultation, open-mindedness and respect for others — remain more relevant than ever if we are to achieve international peace and security, especially by prioritizing prevention and mediation. Did he not often urge us to work for the power of ideas to triumph over bloodshed? By drawing on his legacy, we must carry on his struggle for the respect and promotion of human rights, dignity, equality, democracy and a culture of peace throughout the world. These values, enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, must unite us here within the Organization.

In August 1987, Senegal hosted the first meeting between white South African players from various backgrounds and a delegation of the African National Congress led by President Thabo Mbeki, thereby demonstrating its unwavering commitment to ending apartheid through dialogue and consultations. We enjoyed widespread national support in this objective. We must now work to ensure that the contents of the political declaration (resolution 73/1) that we have just adopted — which is inspired by the life and work of our illustrious Elder and proclaims the period 2019-2028 as the Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace — are shared globally and can serve as a handbook for each of us.

In promoting the values enshrined by President Mandela, Senegal remains steadfast in its commitment to peace and will continue working for a peaceful world in the light of the Ubuntu philosophy of living together in harmony. Together, we can tear down the walls of separation and, together, we must build bridges of friendship and fraternity among our peoples.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, Prime Minister, Minister for Home Affairs, External Communications and National Development Unit, Minister for Finance and Economic Development of the Republic of Mauritius.

Mr. Jugnauth (Mauritius): As we gather today to reflect on global peace together, let us learn from Madiba and his extraordinary personal character and fierce principles, which allowed him to strive for justice for his people.

Mauritius was privileged to host the late President Mandela twice while he was in office and several times after he stepped down. In recognition of his towering moral authority, Mauritius inaugurated the Nelson Mandela Cultural Centre as early as 1986. His values of truth and reconciliation serve as the basis for our own drive to promote unity in diversity. As a country that was built on slavery and indentured labour, Mauritius seeks to promote an inclusive society, respectful of human rights and proud of its African, Indian, Chinese and European heritage.

Madiba's empathy and generosity of spirit allowed him to forgive his enemies and reach out to make enduring peace for his country, despite the hardships he suffered. Madiba never lost sight of what was important, which is peace and social justice for all. A mediator par excellence, he used his status as an elder statesman to further the cause of peace and social justice, even after he stepped down as President of the Republic of South Africa. His whole life showcases the strength of the weak, which, when leaning on the principles of a righteous cause, is capable of transforming diverse injustices and violence into peace and justice.

We as global leaders must do likewise — reach out and build bridges for the betterment of humankind. Let him be an inspiration to us even today as we see a re-emergence of intolerance and xenophobia worldwide. Peace is fragile. We must show strength and rise to the challenge. As we subscribe to the political declaration (resolution 73/1) and support the call for the Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace today, we must strive to ensure the endurance of his legacy by our actions. Let us learn from Madiba's legacy.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Régis Immongault Tatangani, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, Francophonie and Regional Integration of the Republic of Gabon.

Mr. Immongault Tatangani (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): It is an honour for me to speak on behalf of the Gabonese President, His Excellency Mr. Ali Bongo Ondimba, at this Peace Summit, which pays a fitting tribute to the work and ideals defended by Nelson Mandela. That illustrious man left his mark on the history of humankind through his leadership and sense of duty.

The Gabonese people will never forget his first visit as a free man. He set foot on Gabonese soil on 14 February 1991, just three days after his release from prison. Gabon and Mandela have always shared a commitment to peace. It is therefore a real pleasure for me to take part in this Nelson Mandela Peace Summit, which I have no doubt will continue to perpetuate the legacy of that Nobel Peace Prize laureate.

Our planet continues to be plagued by a large number of conflicts and latent crises that require strong world leadership with the ability to think outside the box and provide new and bold solutions that promote lasting peace. There are many situations in which peace remains fragile, despite the significant advances our Organization has made in defusing conflict and establishing and consolidating peace. We have many mechanisms in place, including the Peacebuilding Commission, the Human Rights Council, the United Nations Democracy Fund and various peacekeeping operations. In addition, in recent years our Organization has increased its development efforts to better combat poverty and social exclusion, which are, as we all know, major sources of tension. Our Organization has important tools at its disposal for the promotion of peace and international security.

One might wonder why crises and conflicts persist. Are we sufficiently invested in the quest for peace? Are we capable, at this rate, of establishing just, peaceful, prosperous and inclusive societies by 2030? For Gabon, the main difficulty lies in our ability to make the most of the mechanisms at our disposal. We must therefore maintain and adapt our efforts to the changes and threats to peace and security. The world is changing fast, as is the nature of conflict; it is therefore imperative to adapt our mechanisms for promoting and consolidating peace.

To that end, my country supports the ongoing reforms undertaken by the Secretary-General to improve and adapt the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. Gabon has often underlined the importance of the United Nations adopting more effective prevention tools adapted to current situations. We must step up our efforts in terms of prevention. The establishment of the Central African Early Warning Mechanism, responsible for analysing the risks and evolution of crises and their causes, as well as for seeking solutions, is part of this approach. The Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa advocates preventive diplomacy and mediation, which are strongly endorsed by the States of the subregion, including Gabon. That is also reflected in Gabon's deployment of a contingent to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic.

The efforts of the United Nations, including those that have led to the strengthening of the Group of Friends of Mediation, deserve recognition. I welcome the proposed approach that includes the three pillars of the United Nations from a conflict-prevention perspective. In order to be effective, prevention and, at the very least, mediation must be predictable and adequate financing. Furthermore, because they have in-depth knowledge on the ground, the involvement of regional and subregional organizations and civil society is also essential. It should be recalled that organizations such as the African Union, the Economic Community of Central African States and the Economic Community of West African States have in many cases helped to defuse political crises, promote the peaceful settlement of disputes and encourage the signing of peace agreements.

I would like to conclude by emphasizing the importance of paying particular attention to security risks and threats related to the effects of climate change. Desertification, drought, the extreme variability of rainfall and the recurrence of floods and storms contribute significantly to the decline of resources and can generate new conflicts and increase the number of climate refugees. These dynamics will certainly have an impact on vulnerable regions, such as the Horn of Africa and the Sahel.

In order to address them, mechanisms for conflict prevention and the promotion of peace and security of the United Nations, as well as of regional and subregional organizations, must be subject to the necessary adaptation and resilience. In this regard, I welcome the holding of a Security Council debate on climate change and its implications for international peace and security on 11 July (S/PV.8307). Climate disruption is a pressing issue that we must address with the necessary attention and determination. The survival of our world is at stake.

The Acting President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Jorge Arreaza, Minister of the People's Power for Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Mr. Arreaza (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is a great honour for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to speak on behalf of the 120 States members of the Movement of

Non-Aligned Countries at this historic Peace Summit to commemorate the centenary of Nelson Mandela's birth.

At the 18th Mid-Term Ministerial Meeting of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in April in the city of Baku, ministers adopted a special declaration to commemorate the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela, in which they urge the international community to seize that opportunity to redouble their efforts aimed at tackling the challenges posed by poverty and underdevelopment and to promote the peaceful settlement of disputes, inter alia.

The ministers also took that opportunity to reaffirm that the life lessons of Nelson Mandela are aligned with the fundamental principles, values and objectives of the Non-Aligned Movement. These principles are mutual respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of others; the non-use of force; non-interference in the internal affairs of other States; equality, mutual benefit, peaceful coexistence and the resolution of international controversies by peaceful means. Moreover, we cannot overemphasize the role and leadership of Nelson Mandela, together with our Movement, over which he presided in 1998 and 1999, in the fight against colonialism, racial discrimination and apartheid, especially in South Africa, whose liberation constituted a decisive milestone in the history of our Movement.

Nelson Mandela is one of the greatest leaders of our time. His legacy remains a source of inspiration through his example of courage, service, forgiveness, reconciliation and compassion. In this regard, and perhaps most importantly, in order to honour his legacy we must translate our words into actions. As Nelson Mandela himself said in 2004, "Peace is not just the absence of conflict". We must therefore step up our efforts at the global level to establish conditions leading to sustainable peace and to promote a genuine culture of peace, including, inter alia, through the effective management of protracted crises, the root causes of terrorism and extremism, poverty in every shape and form, discrimination and xenophobia, intolerance and social injustices of every kind.

In that regard, the States members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, faithful to their commitment to strengthening their role and position as an anti-war and peace-loving force and to establishing a peaceful and prosperous world, as well as a fair and equitable world order, believe that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides a framework for action in favour of people, humankind, the planet and prosperity in which no one is left behind and that seeks to achieve universal peace as a greater freedom. At the same time, we recognize that the eradication of poverty in all its forms and manifestations, including extreme poverty, constitutes the greatest global challenge and prerequisite for achieving sustainable development. Today, we therefore take this opportunity to renew our commitment to the full and effective implementation of this beautiful 2030 Agenda to reaffirm our pledge to leave no one behind.

Moreover, we also reiterate our commitment to honouring the legacy of Nelson Mandela and keeping his principles alive, including those of solidarity and disinterested dedication to the service of humankind, particularly in the spheres of conflict resolution, interracial relations, the promotion and protection of human rights, reconciliation, gender equality, the rights of the child and other vulnerable groups, the fight for democracy at the international level and the promotion of a culture of peace throughout the world on behalf of the poorest and most underdeveloped communities.

Mr. Greenidge (Guyana), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In conclusion, the Non-Aligned Movement awaits with great interest the various initiatives and activities to be undertaken during the Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace 2019-2028. We also appeal to the international community to actively engage in that regard. We are committed, just as Madiba was, to building a comprehensive, fair and lasting peace. Let us do so for present and future generations.

If I may, in my national capacity on behalf of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, it is a privilege for us to be part of this tribute and the adoption of resolution 73/1 for Nelson Mandela. Madiba is part of the founding benchmark of the Bolivarian revolution and of everything beautiful that humankind represents. For us, this is not an act of diplomacy or of hypocrisy; we are not pretending or posing. We are paying tribute to one of our fathers, Nelson Mandela — a man of solidarity, a man of equality, a socialist in the best sense of the word, a complete socialist who fought for peace and for the beauty in humankind.

The Acting President: I now call on Her Excellency Ms. Sushma Swaraj, Minister of External Affairs of the Republic of India.

Ms. Swaraj (India): I feel privileged to be attending this event to commemorate the life and contributions of Nelson Mandela. Nelson Mandela's life is an inspiration to all. He showed fearless courage in the face of discrimination and adversity. The values espoused by him — forgiveness and compassion, as well as the inclusiveness of society — are needed now more than ever in these turbulent times around the world.

We Indians consider Madiba to be one of our own. We are proud to call him a Bharat Ratna — a jewel of India. India cherishes its special relationship and long-standing partnership with Africa and its people. Our close bonds are reflected in the philosophy of Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi, father of our nation. Both led their peoples to freedom through mass peaceful struggles. They made every effort to overcome divisive and narrow identity politics and to turn the diversity of our societies into their strength instead of a weakness.

At the United Nations in 1994, Nelson Mandela said that "the society we seek to create must be a people-centred society; all its institutions and its resources must be dedicated to the pursuit of a better life for all our citizens." (*A/49/PV.14, p. 8*). These words are all the more relevant today.

Our world is still beset with conflicts, terror and hateful ideologies that transcend borders and impact our lives. No one should be allowed to support terror or its perpetration. Our collective survival as a global family requires the wisdom of pioneering leaders, such as Mandela, to remain our moral compass. Let us share this planet as one. Let us make a better world for our children.

The Acting President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Jorge Marcelo Faurie, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship of the Argentine Republic.

Mr. Faurie (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for Argentina to speak at this Peace Summit, which provides us with the opportunity to recognize the dedication of President Mandela to the service of humankind. Argentina reaffirms its respect for the tremendous experience and values that are embodied by Nelson Mandela and characterize his life: a vision of the dignity of humankind, a struggle against racial discrimination and injustices, and all his ongoing efforts to promote democracy and a culture of peace.

Nelson Mandela continues to be an inspiration for all those who are part of this Organization, above all thanks to his teaching and his support for the reconciliation of peoples and for his defence of the poorest and most vulnerable communities. Mandela was a unique statesman because he converted his words into actions and showed that true leaders must always be willing to sacrifice everything for the freedom of their people. As States Members of the Organization, we are all responsible for promoting and protecting the human rights of our peoples.

Following the path carved by Mandela, I believe that we must work actively to stamp out all manifestations of discrimination and intolerance and, above all, we must foster education through democracy and learn to resolve conflicts peacefully. Armed conflicts constitute a threat to the respect and enjoyment of human rights. They jeopardize and compromise the right to life, freedom, individual security and the freedoms of expression, association, thought, conscience and religion. Conflicts create conditions that lead to serious violations of international humanitarian law, such as genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Argentina, as an active member of the international community, reaffirms its steadfast commitment to defending human rights and to maintaining international peace and security. We are striving to raise awareness of human suffering and the need to provide humanitarian assistance, especially to those regions that are seriously affected by conflict situations.

Nelson Mandela has been a key figure in our twentieth century and his enormous valour and commitment will always serve as examples for future generations. Before concluding, I wish to recall some of Mandela's inspiring words when he reminded us all that death is inevitable and that, when a man has done what he considers to be his duty to his people and his country, he can rest in peace. He said of himself: "I believe I have made that effort and that is, therefore, why I will sleep for eternity". Two words have always been present here — forgiveness and reconciliation — as well as peace. They sum up his legacy and what we should remember in honouring Nelson Mandela.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Aurelia Frick, Minister for Foreign

Affairs, Justice and Culture of the Principality of Liechtenstein.

Ms. Frick (Liechtenstein): I was a very young woman when Nelson Mandela was released from Robben Island. It is a moment that sticks out in my memory as an example of fortitude and a triumph over adversity and injustice. After he had been unfairly imprisoned for 27 years, Madiba's abiding and dignified commitment to justice quickly became an inspiration to all and has remained so to this day.

Nelson Mandela's commitment to justice and reconciliation stands out in his legacy. More than anyone he embodied the belief that the rule of law is the key to a world of peace and that justice can and will prevail. We in Liechtenstein believe that justice is essential to overcoming oppression and creating sustainable peace. We therefore fight for a strong system of international criminal justice with the International Criminal Court (ICC) at its core. In fact, we see Mandela's lifelong fight reflected in the ICC's founding document. Article 7 of the Rome Statute cites the crime of apartheid as a crime against humanity and therefore one of the worst possible human rights violations. African countries were at the forefront of pressing for a permanent independent international criminal court. And as Mandela said himself, his own continent had suffered enough horrors arising from the inhumanity of human beings towards others. Who knows if many of them might not have occurred or might at least have been minimized had there been an effectively functioning international criminal court?

Nelson Mandela also demonstrated that justice means dealing with past abuses in a way that can lead to a fairer and more peaceful world. While it is essential to prosecute the most serious crimes, justice must also be restorative even for the worst crimes known to humanity. It should provide opportunities for those affected to heal the wounds created by conflict and rebuild society rather than becoming trapped in a cycle of violence, retribution and punishment.

It is also the pursuit of peace that will enable us to deliver on Nelson Mandela's legacy. This year, we will build on it by bringing into force the Kampala amendments on the crime of aggression, according to which leaders who wage aggressive war can be prosecuted before the ICC. By taking this step penalizing illegal warfare, States have made another essential contribution to a world of sustainable peace through justice. We can prevent powerful people from committing any more of the crimes that Madiba had to suffer through, and we can create a more secure, peaceful and just world for future generations. I hope that he will be proud of our efforts to create such a world.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Eldirdiri Mohamed Ahmed, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Sudan.

Mr. Ahmed (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank our sister Republic of South Africa for organizing this important Summit to honour the centenary of the birth of its late leader Nelson Mandela. I would also like to thank all of those who worked to ensure that the Summit could take place, particularly the former President of the General Assembly and the Permanent Representatives of South Africa and Ireland, who facilitated the negotiations that enabled the Assembly to adopt today's political declaration (resolution 73/1).

The Sudan is taking part in this Summit to reaffirm its commitment to the noble values that the late leader Nelson Mandela fought for, especially freedom, full equality and non-discrimination on the basis of a person's colour, ethnicity, religion or the other factors that some use to discriminate against their brethren in humanity. For indeed it is God who created human beings equal in rights and obligations and placed them above all other creatures. In the Qur'an, God says:

> "We have honoured the sons of Adam; provided them with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance things good and pure; and conferred on them special favours, above a great part of our creation." (*XVII, 70*)

The Sudan believed in the cause for which Nelson Mandela fought and for which he and his brothers and sisters who struggled with him paid a very heavy price. In the 1960s the Government of the Sudan hosted him and granted him a Sudanese passport — the first passport he ever held — to assist him in his efforts, and later spread its help to many other African liberation movements. That struggle culminated in the attainment of freedom and independence and in eliminating the apartheid regime in South Africa, the most heinous system in contemporary history.

The active participation of Member States from all over the world in today's Summit is full proof that the values for which Mandela struggled are universal, and that humankind unquestionably needs them today in order to deal with the major threats facing our world. We are in dire need of the values of forgiveness and tolerance that Mandela embodied in his aim of achieving peace, national reconciliation and peaceful coexistence among the various sectors of society while eliminating xenophobia and anti-immigrant sentiments, as well as neo-Nazism. We also need to underscore the values of equality, promote and maintain human rights and protect society's vulnerable sectors within democracy. The aim is to build a better future in which human beings can live on an equal footing and in dignity, on the basis of justice between large and small States, free of intolerance and narrow populism, while strengthening the opportunities for developing countries to attain the Sustainable Development Goals. If we can do that, we will have done humankind the greatest possible service and made the centenary of Nelson Mandela's birth an event that people will remember forever.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Rodolfo Nin Novoa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay.

Mr. Nin Novoa (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): As we commemorate the 100th anniversary of Nelson Mandela's birth, the world is in a deteriorating situation with respect to international peace and security. Wars, famines, racism and xenophobia, to mention just some of the calamities that human beings are inflicting on their fellows, presage a future plagued by difficulties that are increasingly difficult to tackle simultaneously at a time when solidarity, tolerance and empathy appear to be retreating before what are clearly growing trends towards individualism, intolerance and indifference to the fate of others.

Against that backdrop, the iconic figure and imperishable legacy of this fighter for peace, democracy, tolerance and humanism are more relevant today than ever. Nelson Mandela's political and personal journey, marked by his steadfast commitment to human rights, freedom and brotherhood, is the best example of a political praxis that is coherent and consistent with the values that should rule in relations between people and between States. We could not have chosen a figure whose experience and political action could better symbolize the magnitude of the challenges that the world is facing. Mandela was without a doubt a man ahead of his time, a statesman with a profound understanding of the complex nature of human beings who transformed forgiveness, reconciliation, acceptance of others and a culture of dialogue and concord into the fundamental pillars for rebuilding a country, ethically and politically, that had been devastated by decades of segregation, racism and inequality.

Like no one else, he emphasized the dignity of human beings as central to political action, including in the international arena. His generosity, and the fact that he extended a hand to those who had unjustly deprived him of liberty for 27 years, has been an example to the world. Madiba was first and foremost an African, in the way he expressed himself and his pride for his traditions, cultural roots and spiritual heritage. But at the same time he projected himself as the most universal of modern political leaders, aware, as few are, that for human beings to be truly free they need their States to be effectively and sincerely committed to peace, human rights and development.

The political declaration we have adopted at this special meeting today (resolution 73/1) focuses on the essential values that must unite us as civilized countries in fostering multilateralism and peaceful coexistence while always protecting the most vulnerable and striving to ensure the conditions that people need to develop their abilities and talents freely and equally. Recognizing the period from 2019 to 2028 as the Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace should be a turning point that will commit us to taking action in order to achieve a world that is more just, peaceful, democratic, equitable and inclusive, the world for which Mandela fought and that our peoples and his tireless example demand of us.

Uruguay firmly supports the principles proclaimed in the political declaration — the defence of the sovereign equality of States, respect for the territorial integrity and independence of States and refraining from threats or the use of force in international relations — but above all, we are unwaveringly committed to combating racism, xenophobia and all forms of discrimination and intolerance in order to build a more equitable, peaceful, prosperous and inclusive world. That is the best tribute that my country can pay Nelson Mandela.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Siala, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the State of Libya.

Mr. Siala (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, on behalf of my Government I have the pleasure of expressing my thanks and appreciation to the President of the General Assembly for holding this high-level meeting, the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit, which on 23 January the General Assembly agreed to convene in accordance with resolution 72/243.

There has never been such a global consensus on the status of a contemporary figure as on the late Nelson Mandela, known as Madiba. Such attention to an important leader does not come from nowhere. Mandela's history was full of sacrifices, accomplishments and dramatic changes. Perhaps the most important was that he adopted a culture of tolerance and converted it into the kind of driving force that we so badly need nowadays. He has been described as an icon of peace and tolerance and is considered a symbol of freedom, and the transitional period of the Republic of South Africa is testament to that. Great leaders are not born every day, and history is driven only by those who have courage, strength, goodwill, patience and the ability to sacrifice and see things differently from others. Humankind lost one of those great leaders in Nelson Mandela, who lived for almost a century, from 1918 to 2013.

As we all know, Madiba did not put himself above the interests of his people; rather, he strived and did everything he could to bring about transformations and the sustainability of the common good. After entrenching the roots and mechanisms of national reconciliation between all ethnicities and races, he would not permit the exclusion of or any injustice towards the white minority that had controlled his country for centuries. He did not treat them as they had treated the majority of people when they were in control. His approach was one of conscience and firm principle, aimed at improving the lives of ordinary people without discrimination in any way. He enshrined the concept of leadership as service — and with service come sacrifice and the delegation of power to others rather than their marginalization, along with the engagement of society in political life so as to enable it to progress and develop.

My country feels a special appreciation for this great African leader. His struggle was not confined to his country, South Africa. Rather, he felt the suffering and injustice sustained by all nations, particularly the peoples of Africa. That is why my country honoured Nelson Mandela at a time, in 1989, when everyone was shying away from him. Mandela in his turn was a strong and major supporter of my country's cause and helped to end the blockade against Libya's Arab-African people.

The legacy of Mandela will live on in Africa and all over the world. His life, so rich in political struggle and sacrifice, will be an example for millions across the world. I hope that we can all take the time to realize the extent to which Mandela's life has been an inspiration in our own lives, and the impact that it will have on the lives of future generations, including their leaders. While he left us a world that is more just and free, let us commit to advancing towards his vision of unity, reconciliation, global peace, development, prosperity and a better life for everyone.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Khemais Jhinaoui, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tunisia.

Mr. Jhinaoui (Tunisia) (*spoke in Arabic*): We meet today to commemorate the life of Nelson Mandela and to reflect on the struggles of this great leader, out of our appreciation for the sacrifices he made in order to uphold humankind's shared principles and values of freedom, dignity, equality and justice. Whenever we reflect on Nelson Mandela, a series of images comes to mind — images of a statesman who devoted his life to eliminating racial discrimination, defending human rights, achieving national reconciliation and spreading peace in our sister nation of South Africa and in the world at large. Today Mandela's intellectual and human legacy lives on and inspires us. Tunisia welcomes the consensus on the political declaration of the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit (resolution 73/1), which helps to inspire us by declaring the period from 2019 to 2028 a decade of peace, motivating us to work tirelessly to build a more just, peaceful, prosperous, fair and inclusive world and to uphold the common values that Madiba embodied for the sake of peace.

Our world today is confronting enormous and rapidly evolving threats and challenges, widespread extremist violence and terrorism in many parts of the globe and an upsurge in hate speech related to nationalism, intolerance, racism, unwillingness to accept others as well as frequent violations of human rights. Weak governance and a lack of social justice, development inequalities at both the national and international level, growing links between organized crime in its various forms, climate change and other factors all help to create a fertile breeding ground for the further spread of such destructive threats.

Now more than ever, we need to hold on to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the noble objectives that inspired the founders of our inclusive international Organization in San Francisco in the aftermath of the destruction wrought by the Second World War. We must commit to working to realize the purposes of the United Nations, redoubling our efforts to build a just, peaceful, prosperous and inclusive world and reviving the values for which Nelson Mandela stood, while ensuring that human dignity is at the heart of our actions, as proclaimed in the political declaration we have adopted today. In that regard, as a country that has been a centre for positive interaction among various civilizations for more than 3,000 years, Tunisia emphasizes its commitment to promoting the values of tolerance, moderation, mutual respect and solidarity among our peoples and nations.

Tunisia has continued to underscore its commitment to a culture of peace, tolerance, dialogue and consensus in order to manage crises peacefully, as a strategic, civilized choice. That has ensured that we have never seriously deviated from our democratic transition and earned us the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize — which we shared with the National Dialogue Quartet — honouring us with its praise for the constructive role that civil society has played in our country. Given our national experience, now more than ever we need to base our efforts on Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter in order to improve the Organization's effectiveness in peacefully settling conflicts and preventing new ones.

In our belief in the vital role of women as a force for change, we want to reiterate the importance of women's participation in the various preventive initiatives designed to promote our societies' resilience. In that context, in August my country endorsed a national action plan for implementing resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. In its new Constitution of 2014, Tunisia introduced the concept of equality among women and men in the areas of rights and responsibilities, and we have also enacted a progressive law on combating violence against women.

I would like to reiterate that promoting the role of young people as a positive force for change must be at the heart of our common efforts for peace at the United Nations. We welcome the efforts of the Secretary-General in that regard, particularly his intention to launch a new United Nations youth strategy in order to promote our joint efforts to support that important sector of our societies. I would like to recall in the regard a 1996 letter from Nelson Mandela in which he called on young men and women to take on the responsibility of changing the world in order to improve people's lives and affirmed that the future lies in young people's hands. Let us continue our efforts not only to provide better opportunities for our young men and women but also to promote their ability to lead and shoulder responsibilities in order to create a better future for our peoples and our countries. Let us educate our youth and our societies as a whole on the legacy of Nelson Mandela and the human values for which he fought. For that reason, the Tunisian postal service has issued a stamp in honour of Nelson Mandela's centenary as a symbol of our endeavours for Africa and the world.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Kairat Abdrakhmanov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Mr. Abdrakhmanov (Kazakhstan): I would first like to congratulate Her Excellency Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the General Assembly at its seventy-third session, on her election to her high office and to wish her every success in leading this body.

Nelson Mandela is indeed an icon and an exemplary world figure whom we regard as one of the greatest moral and political leaders of our time. His lifelong dedication to the service of humankind became a vital force in global efforts for peace, justice and equality. I would like to express our sincere gratitude to the delegations of Ireland and South Africa for successfully steering the preparatory process of the draft political declaration reaffirming the values of Nelson Mandela, which we all share. I therefore join others in welcoming our adoption today of a historic political declaration (resolution 73/1), which should serve as a reminder to the entire international community of the imperative for human dignity and justice and the pursuit of peace through dialogue and reconciliation. We take inspiration from Mr. Mandela's life, which was based on mutual respect, goodwill and non-violent tools for fighting the many conflicts that are tearing apart the world today. That dramatic escalation of conflicts triggered by ethnic, religious, territorial and other factors has led to a severe humanitarian crisis across the globe. For peace to prevail, we must address all the root causes not only of conflict but also of the other scourges that confront us, including terrorism, extremism, organized crime and human trafficking.

And we must eliminate severe poverty and deprivation, food, water and energy insecurities and the threats of climate change and weapons of mass destruction, all of which aggravate conflicts.

In its 26 years of independence, Kazakhstan has achieved important political, social, economic and democratic targets, thereby preserving the stability and well-being of its people. For my country — where more than 100 ethnic groups, with eight different religious denominations, live together in peace and harmony — maintaining inter-ethnic and interreligious peace at the national, regional and international levels is a top priority, and Kazakhstan has proved both its commitment and its proficiency in preventive diplomacy, mediation and honest brokering by peacefully resolving many conflicts.

Our far-reaching commitment is embodied in the 2016 anti-war manifesto created by Kazakhstan's President, Nursultan Nazarbayev, entitled "The World. The 21st Century". It is a road map for peace that in many ways converges with the Secretary-General's message to the world through his new peace agenda, his plan of action on nuclear disarmament and his far-reaching reforms. Kazakhstan's manifesto calls for the use of all the available tools, from early-warning mechanisms, conflict prevention, diplomacy and mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding to development, and for capacity-building by all Member States. My President's January 2017 policy address to the Security Council, entitled "Kazakhstan's concept and vision for sustaining global partnerships for a secure, just and prosperous world" (see S/PV.7857), is another relevant tool to that end. It emphasizes several priorities aimed at preventing and ending military confrontation at the regional and global levels and creating a conflict-free world by the time of the United Nations centenary, a goal that we would like the international community to adopt as its own.

As Mr. Mandela himself often said, it is in our hands to create a better world. Using him as our guiding star, let us resolve to relentlessly strive for a fair, peaceful and sustainable society in which all people live together peacefully and with equal opportunities and where no one is left behind. Let us recall all the promises that we have made in the Charter of the United Nations, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the new agenda for sustaining peace (A/72/707). Only our collective will and solidarity as Member States can turn a world in crisis into a world of great hope and promise like the one that Mr. Mandela dreamed of.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Ivica Dačić, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia.

Mr. Dačić (Serbia) (*spoke in Serbian; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): I am greatly honoured to attend the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit here at United Nations Headquarters in New York, all the more so as it is held in honour of Nelson Mandela, an exceptional man and a symbol of the struggle for a just world, as well as a great warrior for peace. The Summit, held just before the general debate of the General Assembly at its seventy-third session and in honour of the centenary of Mr. Mandela's birth, will help us to make a more than symbolic contribution to the constructive atmosphere that we need to make progress in realizingthe goals of the United Nations, including the most precious among them, that of world peace.

As a successor State to the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Serbia is proud of the role played by Yugoslavia and President Tito in the establishment of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. The Movement has played an important role in the struggle against apartheid and for decolonization, while also investing continued effort in promoting the economic and social status of underdeveloped and developing countries.

While the world may be undergoing rapid change today, many of the goals close to the heart of Nelson Mandela, a stalwart supporter of peace, continue to prevail. We must work even more diligently to promote peace, reconciliation, unity, non-discrimination, protection and human rights. Our world today is grappling with various threats and challenges and is quickly becoming a very different place from what it once was. We are witnessing myriad crises, whose nature and consequences are often complex and interconnected, and we should therefore join forces in the quest for global responses.

For us in Serbia, the importance of the place and role of the United Nations in the international community is unquestionable, and the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations are valid and indispensable. The equality of States, refraining from the use of force, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, the peaceful solution of disputes and respect for diversity continue to be vital principles. My country supports the equitable participation of States in the system of global management, and we firmly believe that with political will and a genuine readiness to work together, along with a strengthened role for the United Nations tailored to addressing modern needs, we can reach higher in our efforts to build a better world for all.

The prevention and solution of disputes and crises by peaceful means are indispensable tools for building and maintaining international peace and security. Strengthening a culture of peace and dialogue and pursuing policies of compromise and peaceful coexistence are therefore key factors in that regard. In the face of ever more frequent threats and new challenges, we must work together constructively to create the conditions for sustainable peace, strengthen institutions and democracy and promote respect for human rights and the rule of law.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a historic document and a vision of world development that can empower us to build a better future for humankind by eradicating poverty and hunger, ensuring inclusive education and health and reducing the increasing inequalities within and among nations.

Serbia strongly condemns terrorism and all forms of extremism and radicalism that pose a threat to peace. Together with the United Nations, in its leading role, and with our partners all over the world, we stand ready to make our own contribution to the suppression of those threats. As a leader in its region through the scope of its participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations, Serbia believes that peacekeeping is the responsibility of all, as are the continued commitment, engagement and strengthening of the relevant capacities of the United Nations. The activities of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo are particularly important to us, and the undiminished scope of its neutral status is essential to stability and the creation of conditions conducive to achieving a lasting and sustainable solution to the question of Kosovo and Metohija. Reaching a political settlement of the Kosovo issue is one of Serbia's national priorities. In defending its sovereignty and territorial integrity, Serbia is defending international law, the Charter of the United Nations and international peace and security as well as its own national and historical identity. My country is firmly committed to peace, the European Union-facilitated dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina and to implementing the agreements reached. In our conduct of a responsible policy in that regard, we will do our best to protect the interests of our people as well as regional peace and stability.

In concluding my statement and once again paying my respects to the great man in whose honour we are gathered here today, I want to assure the Assembly that Serbia will gladly partner with every country willing and ready to share the responsibility for building a stable, just and prosperous world.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Wang Yi, State Counsellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China.

Mr. Wang Yi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Mr. Nelson Mandela was a prominent South African leader in the fight against apartheid and the founding father of the new South Africa. Throughout his life, Mr. Mandela pursued national liberation in Africa, defended the dignity of African people and promoted the unity of African countries. He devoted his entire life to Africa's development and progress. We should forever cherish the part that he played in promoting the peace and reconciliation of humankind. His great spirit will surely encourage future generations to work unremittingly for peace. It is regrettable, however, that peace remains elusive in so many places throughout the world. As we gather here to commemorate the centenary of Mr. Mandela's birth, we should work to promote the spirit of peace, reconciliation, equality and inclusiveness that he advocated, values that will also enable the United Nations to better fulfil its noble mission of maintaining peace.

The United Nations is the symbol of multilateralism and an important guardian of world peace. In Mr. Mandela's time it was the strong moral pressure of the United Nations and the international community that helped to accelerate the disintegration of apartheid. As we meet today, unilateralism and protectionism are on the rise, posing severe challenges to the United Nations-centred contemporary international system. The international community must stand united under the umbrella of multilateralism, uphold the central role of the United Nations in international affairs and provide more predictability and stability in this turbulent world.

The path of dialogue and reconciliation is the sure way towards peace. Mr. Mandela was committed to political negotiation as a means of advancing peace and reconciliation in South Africa. He set an example for countries and regions in conflict on how to achieve national reconciliation and reconstruction. In the face of complex hotspot issues and rising regional conflicts, the parties concerned should use dialogue and consultation to resolve disputes and disagreements, pursuing inclusive dialogue that accommodates the interests and legitimate concerns of all parties. Development is the foundation for the consolidation of peace.

Mr. Mandela once said that overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity but an act of justice. Indeed, the elimination of poverty constitutes the protection of basic human rights, because while poverty exists there can be no genuine liberty. His words are still highly relevant today. Many of the world's problems have their root causes in poverty and can be truly resolved only through development. The world must address both the symptoms and the root causes of conflict, implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and help developing countries improve their people's livelihoods and enhance development capacity so as to provide the basic foundations for sustainable peace.

Mr. Mandela was a pioneer in the relationship between China and South Africa and made important contributions to China's relations with South Africa and with Africa as a whole. Together, China and Africa are now a community with a shared future working to realize win-win cooperation. Ensuring unity and cooperation with African countries is not only a major cornerstone of China's foreign policy but also its firm and long-term strategic position. The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation recently held a successful summit in Beijing, the best way for us to commemorate Nelson Mandela. The summit brought together Chinese and African leaders to discuss future plans for Chinese-African relations and to draw up a blueprint for China-Africa cooperation. President Xi Jinping proposed that China and Africa work together to build an even closer community with a shared future and a focus on eight major initiatives. The summit ushered in a new era for China-Africa cooperation and opened up broader prospects for South-South cooperation, providing strong momentum for world stability, peace and development.

We call on all countries to view the centenary of Nelson Mandela's birth as a new starting point and today's Peace Summit as a new opportunity to jointly build a community with a shared future for humankind and a world of lasting peace and universal security.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Denis Moses, Minister for Foreign and CARICOM Affairs of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Moses (Trinidad and Tobago): Trinidad and Tobago welcomes the opportunity to speak at this historic Peace Summit by which the international community commemorates the centenary of the birth of the activist, leader, nobel laureate and former President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela. Nelson Mandela was one of the most eminent leaders of our generation. We salute him as a freedom fighter and an icon of reconciliation. His life and legacy are testament to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, that is, to maintain international peace and security and promote and protect human rights.

We cannot but be reminded of his powerful statement that:

> "The world remains beset by so much human suffering, poverty and deprivation. It is in your hands to make of our world a better one for all".

That is the very reason we are gathered at the United Nations and the very reason that States subscribe to multilateral diplomacy. Mr. Mandela encouraged nations to resolve conflicts through diplomacy and reconciliation. As President of South Africa, he advocated that his country's foreign policy be based on human rights. He believed in non-violence and negotiation as means for solving disputes. That culture of peace is important for small States such as Trinidad and Tobago that must rely on the international rule of law, under strict observance by all States, and the purposes and principles laid down in the Charter of the United Nations, in order to guarantee their right to a secure, sovereign and peaceful existence.

In 2004, Trinidad and Tobago had the distinct honour of welcoming Nelson Mandela to its shores. Among the many issues that we discussed, the role of sport in creating a culture of peace, as well as gender equality and the empowerment of women, featured prominently on the agenda. In 2014, a park in our capital city of Port of Spain was renamed in his honour. Mr. Mandela's memory therefore lives on in Trinidad and Tobago. We pay tribute to Mr. Mandela's foresight, as evidenced in the words "peace is the greatest weapon for development that anyone can have". In that connection, Trinidad and Tobago would like to take this opportunity to renew its commitment to the full and effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to reaffirm our pledge to leave no one behind. We also look forward to the activities to be convened within the framework of the 2019-2028 Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace and commit to actively participating in those initiatives.

Finally, Trinidad and Tobago reaffirms its commitment to honouring Nelson Mandela's legacy and continuing to abide by his values and selfless dedication to the service of humankind. We call on the international community to renew its commitment to global peace, conflict prevention and resolution, peacebuilding, the promotion and protection of human rights, and development. Like Madiba, as Mr. Mandela was fondly known, may we also commit to doing our part by leaving this world a better place before we depart it.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Everly Paul Chet Greene, Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Immigration of Antigua and Barbuda.

Mr. Greene (Antigua and Barbuda): Antigua and Barbuda joins the rest of the world at this prestigious Peace Summit and, in particular, pays homage to Nelson Mandela, known as Madiba. Let us find within ourselves the resolve to confront the threats to peace for humankind in all their dimensions, a lesson that Mandela taught us by example and to which we are all great heirs.

Confronting the root causes that threaten peace is by no means an easy task. However, the increased attention we are seeing to some of the most deep-rooted problems facing the international community today gives us hope. Unfortunately, the consideration of peace only comes in the wake of the indescribable horrors that are caused by humankind's stubborn clinging to old patterns of behaviour. But as we look around our global community, we ask ourselves what we can do to solve the many problems we face. How can we find and maintain the peace that we so genuinely and passionately desire? Today I implore us to ask ourselves, not as individuals, but as members of the General Assembly: what is peace? Our objective brainstorming should leave us positively resolved to find the answer to that all-important question.

Allow me to share with the Assembly some elements of what peace entails for the small micro-island State of Antigua and Barbuda. Peace means respect for human rights and the differences of others. It means ensuring the protection of women, children, the elderly and the disabled. Peace is devoid of the greed that ends in unparalleled wealth for a few and nauseating poverty for the many. Peace means global health awareness, protection and accessibility for all. Peace encourages democracy for global citizens through non-violent change and non-interference in the application of democracy by sovereign States. Peace is the elimination of nuclear weapons and the control of small arms. Peace is the absence of violence and the acceptance of differences in race, gender and religion. Peace is a position from which to value the limits of nature's resources. It is the absence of the ignorance and short-sightedness that selfishly plunder Earth's plenty. Peace is the understanding that climate change is real and that sustainability should be our top priority. Peace means fair trade, equality, equity in globalization and the right to development.

The time has come for us to act decisively, notwithstanding the limitations of the Assembly. When we have been called on in the past to act as a community of nations, we have risen to the occasion. We have given hope and protection to millions the world over through the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and by challenging all forms of discrimination based on race, sex or religious belief and upholding the rights of the child and the empowerment of women, to name but a few examples.

As we focus on peace and its contributing factors, it would be remiss of me if I did not recall the International Decade for People of African Descent and the ongoing efforts with respect to reparatory justice. We can do so much more if we take a stand. As the indomitable Nelson Mandela remarked, "Do not look the other way; do not hesitate. Recognize that the world is hungry for action, not words. Act with courage and vision." As Mandela went on to note, "sometimes it falls upon a generation to be great. You can be that great generation."

I am heartened by the adoption of the political declaration (resolution 73/1) of the Peace Summit and the General Assembly's recognition that peace can be achieved universally. We can be that great generation.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Gilles Tonelli, Government Adviser and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Principality of Monaco.

Mr. Tonelli (Monaco) (*spoke in French*): The Nelson Mandela Peace Summit brings us together to celebrate the legacy of an extraordinary man who has become a symbol of the struggle against oppression and injustice around the world. It is particularly symbolic that the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela coincides with the seventieth anniversary of the adoption by the General Assembly of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Throughout his life, Nelson Mandela worked tirelessly, risking his own life, for tolerance, dialogue, peace and justice. After 27 years on Robben Island, his courage enabled him to reject revenge and instead seek dialogue and reconciliation. Not only was apartheid ended, but Nelson Mandela became a statesman and a legend in his lifetime.

The troublemaker who won the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize for his moral and political struggle said that "a man does not become a freedom fighter in the hope of winning awards". Whether through the establishment of his foundation in 1999 or the creation of The Elders in 2007, Nelson Mandela never stopped working to resolve the crises that destabilize our societies and endanger humankind. I would like to conclude with a quote from Nelson Mandela that he made during a visit to Monaco:

> "Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It speaks to young people in a language they understand."

Their Serene Highnesses Prince Albert II and his wife Princess Charlene, both Olympians, continue to maintain that message of hope through their charitable actions.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Mamadi Touré, Minister for Foreign Affairs and for Guineans Abroad of the Republic of Guinea.

Mr. Touré (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to convey to the General Assembly the sincere regrets of President Mr. Alpha Condé of Guinea, who wanted to participate in this important high-level meeting but was unable to do so owing to prior engagements.

The Republic of Guinea is delighted to be able to participate in this meeting on peace, to which that great son of Africa Nelson Mandela dedicated his life. His long struggle against every form of oppression, injustice, racism and discrimination represents a shining light for the whole of humankind in its quest for a world of fairness and shared prosperity. Thanks to his resilience and his keen sense of forgiveness and human dignity, he was able to build a pluralistic society in which every sector of his nation could live in harmony. That humanist vision, which guided him throughout his journey, enabled him to transcend the stigma of apartheid and to achieve the national reconciliation and stability that characterize South Africa today.

This Peace Summit is being held against an international backdrop of routine violations of the foundations of peace. We are witnessing an increase in terrorism, violent extremism and intolerance. The life of Madiba is a lesson for our current generations and those of the future, and from now on it is up to us take ownership of his virtues in pursuit of a better world, in which dialogue, agreement and the acceptance of others are the watchwords for our collective action. In the struggle to promote the peace we need for development and the benefit of our peoples, we have the responsibility to promote and strengthen the role of the United Nations as represented by its purposes and principles. The meeting that brings us together today is all the more symbolic because it coincides with the seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

I would like to conclude by warmly welcoming the political declaration that we have adopted today (resolution 73/1).

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

President Buhari: It is indeed a great honour to participate in this historic event reflecting on global peace and commemorating the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela, a man whose life symbolized uncommon humility, compassion, courage and forgiveness. Our sincere appreciation goes to President Cyril Ramaphosa, of South Africa, and Prime Minister Leo Varadkar, of Ireland, and their teams for nurturing and finalizing the political declaration that we have adopted today (resolution 73/1) and that will undoubtedly set forth commitments that will honour the legacy of Nelson Mandela.

We are witnessing a time in which the world is facing diverse challenges that range from conflicts to climate change, terrorism, desertification, poverty, arms trafficking and violent extremism. Yet it is also a time of great hope and renaissance. When he was facing the death penalty in April 1964, Nelson Mandela spoke from the dock at the end of his Rivonia trial and said:

> "During my lifetime, I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal that I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."

It is in the context of that ethos of the great Mandela that we are adopting today's declaration. We must therefore make concerted efforts to foster a just, peaceful, prosperous, inclusive and fair world and revive the values for which Nelson Mandela stood by placing human dignity at the centre of our actions. This centenary celebration is a way for us to reflect on the legacy of Nelson Mandela and his unwavering advocacy for human rights, social justice and peace. It also affords us the rare privilege of rededicating ourselves to the service of humankind by championing democracy, conflict resolution, disarmament, mutual respect, reconciliation, gender equality and the fight against poverty. There can be no doubt that in the quest to attain peace and development, the world will draw inspiration from the life of Nelson Mandela.

As we herald the Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace, Nigeria calls on all States to recognize that the United Nations is built on the pillars of peace and security, development and human rights, which are the foundations of our collective well-being. We emphasize that there can be no peace without sustainable development and no sustainable development without peace and full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all.

Through this declaration, we recognize the contribution of women to the advancement of societies and to the prevention and resolution of conflict. We are committed to promoting and protecting the rights of all women and to providing them with an environment that can enable them to realize their full potential. We also recognize that the inherent dignity and equal and inalienable rights of all peoples of the world are the foundation of freedom, justice and world peace. We declare that racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance present the very opposite of the noble purposes of the United Nations. We recognize that tolerance of cultural, ethnic, racial and religious diversity is essential to lasting peace, understanding and friendship among peoples, nations, cultures and individuals.

As Mandela passes into history, we stand with him in his aspirations for a better world. It is our duty to live up to his indelible legacy by collectively holding ourselves accountable to the values, principles and hopes of the Declaration and striving for a just, peaceful, prosperous, democratic, fair and inclusive world.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Awad Isse, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Somalia.

Mr. Isse (Somalia): It is a great honour for me to address the General Assembly at this Nelson Mandela Peace Summit. The great Mandela embodied the qualities of a transformative leader, who steered his people with devotion and principled ideals and wielded the strong leadership of a man who truly understood the importance of healing a divided nation. He will be remembered as a magnanimous leader who symbolized humility, compassion and courage, and as an icon of democracy.

Mandela's persistence and determination to embark on his long walk to freedom, even when facing brutal situations, made it possible for the likes of Abdulrahim Abby Farah, the former Permanent Representative of Somalia to the United Nations, who headed the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid, to spring into action to end the indignity of apartheid.

Mandela left us many legacies. The memorable event of the final game of the Rugby World Cup hosted by South Africa in 1995 served as a pivotal moment, not only for the people of South Africa but for the whole world. Nelson Mandela rallied national support for the game by emphasizing the importance of supporting the national team as an act of unity. For six weeks he worked tirelessly to present his case to the people of South Africa by stressing the importance of oneness, harmony and peace. On that day in 1994, the spectators all stood together chanting the name of a revered leader — Mandela, Mandela, Mandela. All it took was one gesture by a great man to change the course of a nation's history forever and usher in a sense of equality, harmony and peace. Here I too would like to recall one of my favourite lines of Mandela,

> "I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal that I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die".

Mandela's unwavering commitment and his transformative leadership should inspire us all as world leaders.

It is gratifying to be able to recognize Abdulrahim Abby Farah, our former Permanent Representative to the United Nations, who passed away recently, for his contribution in presiding over the release of Mandela. I want to highlight that to illustrate the interconnectedness that exists between African nations and indeed humankind, as well as what the power of unity and integration can accomplish. Mandela utilized those very ideals to develop a road map that laid the foundation for a resilient and democratic post-apartheid South Africa. Those same principles and values of forgiveness, social integration and national healing are models that Somalia is embarking on as we work towards advancing peace, security, good governance and building responsive and effective State institutions.

In conclusion, and as we celebrate the legacy of Madiba, Somalia supports the political declaration (resolution 73/1) of this important Nelson Mandela Peace Summit.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Dionísio Da Costa Babo Soares, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste.

Mr. Babo Soares (Timor-Leste): Timor-Leste is proud to join the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit in commemoration of the magnificent legacy of Nelson Mandela and the centenary of his birth. We honour Nelson Mandela as a great humanitarian and for his dedication and contribution to world peace, reconciliation and human rights.

For us, Nelson Mandela's bequest as a great mentor of peace and reconciliation inspired Timor-Leste in our struggle for independence and in what we are today as a nation. His thoughts and principles encouraged us and gave us hope and confidence during our bleakest times, as we struggled against oppression and colonization on our journey to independence. We are deeply grateful to him and all his efforts to help us with our long-standing struggle to achieve independence. I remember very clearly the time he visited our resistance leader Xanana Gusmão in prison in 1995. That simple gesture was to prove an important turning point in our history. Nelson Mandela impressed on us the importance of dialogue, and the need to understand other political and cultural views in order to settle our differences.

We realized that dialogue was an extremely effective way to reduce tensions between us and our opponents. That resulted in the understanding that we needed to end the fighting in order to find peace among ourselves. Madiba's vision of reconciliation truly inspired us and provided a stepping stone for the creation of our own Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation, which listened to and registered thousands of testimonies of suffering and loss, and facilitated traditional community-based reconciliation processes. That helped us to heal as a nation, so that we could move forward towards our future without the burden of the past. The Commission produced a report, *Chega*, which means "enough".

Our founding fathers also wisely chose to extend reconciliation beyond our national borders, and we were also inspired to establish a Commission on Truth and Friendship with our nearest neighbour, Indonesia, in order to forge strong relations and long-lasting diplomatic ties between us. Madiba's legacy also inspired us to come together and establish the Group of 7 Plus platform in 2010, together with 19 other countries across five continents, to pursue dialogue and reconciliation based on a spirit of voluntarism, solidarity and cooperation.

In today's world, where we see protracted conflicts and great human suffering, Nelson Mandela's dedication, efforts and struggle for a fairer, more inclusive and peaceful world are an important reminder of our collective responsibility to achieve that. We are urged to action by his commitment to women's empowerment and his emphasis on their crucial role at the peace table, as well as the importance of listening to and involving our young people in all our national processes. The political declaration that we have adopted at this summit (resolution 73/1) should seal the responsibility of each one of us today to take all actions within our reach for peace.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Milner Tozaka, Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade of Solomon Islands.

Mr. Tozaka (Solomon Islands): Amid all the challenges and calamities that have gripped our world, the hosting of a peace summit is fitting and timely and rightly marks the centenary of the birth of a beacon of humanity, Nelson Mandela.

As global leaders, we have the ultimate responsibility to ensure that the generations that succeed us do not inherit a world of full of fear and depredation. We must rather use every possible means to enable peace to prevail in all that we do. We must strive to eliminate conflict by building bridges and forging partnerships and relationships despite our differences. Since its inception, the United Nations has continued to actively advocate from a platform of peace. The Charter of the United Nations remains the firm compass by which we set our course of action. It compels each us to fulfil the shared duty to uphold peaceful coexistence within and among our countries, seek to settle disputes and use intensive, sustained and inclusive dialogue as a first resort in resolving differences and conflicts. If we dedicate our attention to promoting reconciliation among our peoples and between our nations, bitter rivalries and warfare will serve no purpose.

Nelson Mandela epitomized the values and principles of humanity and global citizenship. He showed that genuine reconciliation can rid the world of discrimination and achieve peace. These are examples and values that we must encourage and follow through upon with firm action if we are to truly honour his legacy.

Solomon Islands also subscribes to the notion that there is no single template for peace and that the United Nations must be responsive to individual situations on the ground. The seeds of peace germinate development, economic prosperity and sustained growth. We also recognize that the prevailing circumstances in our individual countries may undermine the foundations on which sustained peace can thrive. Peacebuilding and nation-building are ideals that foster unity, particularly in post-conflict States. I speak to the experience of Solomon Islands as a post-conflict State, aspiring to maintain sustainable peace. The peaceful coexistence of communities and peoples must not elude us or be taken for granted.

The values of peace and humanity are priceless. Nelson Mandela's life and ability to overcome adversity and ultimately triumph set a benchmark for leadership to which we all aspire. In pledging my Government's support for today's political declaration (resolution 73/1), I would like to cite the words of the man who stands as a beacon of peace and humanity today: "We commit ourselves to the construction of a complete, just and lasting peace."

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Augustine Phillip Mahiga, Minister for Foreign Affairs, East Africa, Regional and International Cooperation of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Mr. Mahiga (Tanzania): I would like to express our sincere gratitude to South Africa and Ireland for their excellent organization of today's important high-level event. On behalf of my country, and on my own behalf, we thank the organizers and the United Nations for designating today as a day of commemoration.

We are here to recognize, commemorate and celebrate the lifetime contributions and ideals of Nelson Mandela as well as his practical involvement in realizing freedom, justice and peace in the world in general, and in Africa in particular. As we celebrate the centenary of his birth, we remind ourselves of his unique legacy of a spirit of patriotism and endurance in the work that he accomplished during his lifetime. He did it in a spirit of reconciliation and of future participation in world affairs. We look to this day as a day of peace and reconciliation, a day when human rights received a champion by the name of Nelson Mandela, and a day for the future prosperity of Africa and the world.

The liberation of Africa ushered in peace and democracy. Tanzania is proud to have hosted the headquarters of the African Liberation Committee of the Organization of African Unity and took an active part in the liberation struggle to emancipate our fellow African brothers and sisters. We shall not forget that Africa's struggle for independence was very much inspired by the late Julius Mwalimu Nyerere who, in his last days, worked together with the late Nelson Mandela to lay the foundations of peace, reconciliation and stability in Burundi. To live up to the commitment of helping the liberation struggle, Tanzania not only became the seat of the African National Congress and other liberation movements in Southern Africa, it has also remained committed to the cause of freedom, peace and justice throughout the world, particularly under the banner of the United Nations.

Mandela was not only a committed leader; he will also remain an icon of peace for the world and for Africa, showing the way to a path of reconciliation and an option for peace rather than conflict in finding solutions to difficult issues related to conflicts. Furthermore, as we bring forth the political declaration we have adopted today (resolution 73/1), let us all be reminded of Mandela's long-standing values and humanitarian service in conflict resolution and the promotion and protection of human rights. I stand here to reiterate that Tanzania will always be a champion and active advocate for preserving his legacy and the maintenance of peace in the spirit of Madiba that we are celebrating today.

I would like to conclude by encouraging current and future leaders to make use of the exemplary leadership of Nelson Mandela to encourage tolerant, harmonious societies and peaceful coexistence. His last words to the General Assembly and to the United Nations should always serve as a lasting reminder of the important role of the Organization in the liberation of South Africa and other African countries, and we should hold him in high esteem as one of the pillars that will always underscore the significance of the United Nations as a citadel of peace for us today and for future generations.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker for this afternoon. In view of the late hour, we will now suspend this plenary meeting. We will hear the remaining speakers on Tuesday, 2 October, at 10 a.m.

The meeting was suspended at 6.15 p.m. on Monday, 24 September, and resumed at 10.10 a.m. on Tuesday, 2 October.

The President returned to the Chair.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Before proceeding to the item on our agenda, in keeping with established practice, I would like to draw the attention of the General Assembly to document A/73/367/Add.1, in which the Secretary-General informs the President of the General Assembly that, since the issuance of his communication contained in document A/73/367/Rev.1, Guinea-Bissau has made the payment necessary to reduce its arrears specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly takes due note of the information contained in document A/73/367/Add.1?

It was so decided.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The General Assembly will now resume the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit in order to get to the end of the list of speakers from Monday, 24 September.

Before we begin with the list of speakers, I would like to remind members of some important organizational matters pertaining to the conduct of plenary meetings. I would like to appeal to all speakers to keep their statements brief and concise in order to make maximum use of the limited time we have for this high-level meeting. In order to enable all on the list of speakers to be heard, statements should be limited to three minutes when speaking in a national capacity and five minutes when speaking on behalf of a group, as stipulated in resolution 72/243.

As members will recall, in its resolution 72/313, of 17 September, the General Assembly called for speakers to adhere strictly to the time limits in the Assembly, particularly during high-level meetings. To assist speakers in managing their time, a light system has been installed at the speaker's rostrum. Participants with longer statements are encouraged to read a shorter version of their text and to submit their full statements to the Secretariat for posting on the PaperSmart portal.

Also in accordance with resolution 72/313, the "all protocol observed" principle is recommended, whereby participants are encouraged to refrain from the listing of standard protocol expressions during their statements. Bearing in mind the time limit, I would like to appeal to speakers to deliver their statements at a reasonable pace so that interpretation into the six official United Nations languages may be properly provided.

I appeal for speakers' cooperation in observing the time limits for statements so that all those inscribed on the list can be heard in a timely manner.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Vladimir Makei, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus.

Mr. Makei (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to begin my statement at this event dedicated to Nelson Mandela, one of the most famous people ever to fight for Africa's independence, with some of his own words: "It is so easy to break down and destroy. The heroes are those who make peace and build." It is no coincidence that our Peace Summit is named for a statesman and a great political leader, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate who is inextricably linked to an entire era of modern history. The ideals preached by Mandela made the international community believe that world peace might not be an illusion. Rather, it is a reality that we States Members of the United Nations can and must achieve together.

Unfortunately, not everybody heeds Mandela's preaching. Today there are still wars and geopolitical clashes and conflicts. Decade after decade, we continue to see few practical, viable results from the international efforts to prevent armed conflicts and free the world of weapons of mass destruction. Nor have we seen significant progress in the bilateral forums for disarmament negotiations. In fact, the threats posed by nuclear weapons are becoming more tangible and are having a direct impact on global and regional security. To take just one example, a mechanism as effective as that of nuclear-weapon-free zones is still a long way from covering every region of the world. In the mid-1990s Belarus proposed setting up nuclear-weapon-free zones in Central and Eastern Europe. At the time, unfortunately, our well-intentioned impulse and call went unheeded. Perhaps today, with the world closer than it has ever been to the threat of a major conflict, we should look at that initiative in a new light.

The main reason for the growing confrontations, which represent a serious obstacle on the path to universal peace and harmony, is the lack of trust, unity, mutual respect and solidarity between countries. If we are to attain Nelson's Mandela's grand ideals in the service of the entire international community, we must aim only for those goals and priorities that can engender unifying, consensus-based ideas and approaches and enjoy universal support. And we can achieve that only by strengthening confidence-building measures among every participant, without exception, in international efforts for peace. Today the world needs a new format for international relations, based on modern principles designed to ensure peace, security and cooperation. To that end, Belarus has proposed conducting a broad dialogue aimed at transcending the current disagreements between States and developing new principles for collaborative efforts that are acceptable to all. Belarus is ready to join and participate actively in that process, and will continue to contribute to regional security.

In conclusion, I would again like to cite some words of Nelson Mandela, which are as relevant today as when they were first spoken and which demand an answer.

> "All of us should ask ourselves the question: have I done everything in my power to bring about lasting peace and prosperity in my city and my country?"

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal.

Mr. Gyawali (Nepal): At the outset, I would like to commend you, Madam President, for convening this important summit to mark the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela.

I feel honoured to be asked to offer a sincere tribute to an extraordinary statesman of our time. He was indeed the epitome of struggle, freedom, human dignity and democracy. The strength of unity, the power of discipline, the influence of humility and the results of diligence are the lessons that we can learn from his life. He taught us the importance of reconciliation, forgiveness and compassion by forgiving even those who had taken away everything he had. Truth eventually emerges triumphant, no matter how strong the adversaries are, and a sense of fortitude and sacrifice defeats even the most invincible. His career, which spanned his years as an anti-apartheid activist to his visionary presidency, is a living testimony to that, and his ideals will continue to inspire humanity. In that regard, Nepal is proud to recall its service as a member of the Special Committee against Apartheid since its inception and as its Vice-Chair for 25 years.

Nepal, the birthplace of Buddha, the apostle of peace, has unwavering faith in peace. The long contribution we have made to United Nations peace operations testifies to that. Nepal shares the vicissitudes of Africa's revolutionary past. Our history has been marked by long struggles against the aggression of imperialists; authoritarian regimes and socioeconomic and political oppression, and by our efforts to cement our most recent peace process. The Nepali people have shown exemplary resilience in the pursuit of peace. Our political forces have exhibited wisdom and chosen a path of peaceful solutions to conflict through dialogue and accommodation, ideals embraced by the late Nelson Mandela. Our home-grown, nationally owned and led peace process helped us to make a successful transition to becoming a stable, peaceful State after the holding of peaceful democratic elections under the Constitution adopted by our people's representatives.

Every conflict situation is unique and demands context-specific solutions. Just as there is no universal model for conflict resolution, there is no single model for addressing issues of peace and justice. The main thrust of our peace process has been to achieve reconciliation by healing the wounds left by conflict. We believe that as long as the parties to a conflict choose to address accountability issues through a functioning national justice system and to seek accommodation through reconciliation, it is unnecessary to have recourse to the international justice system. That is our understanding of paragraph 19 of the political declaration we have adopted (resolution 73/1). Nepal has allowed the independent transitional justice process to take its course, in accordance with our laws. We are now well on the way to reconciliation by ensuring social justice, nurturing an inclusive society and delivering good governance. Nepal reaffirms its faith in the values of world peace and stands ready to share our experiences of our successful peace process.

As I am sharing this success story with the Assembly, conflicts around the world continue unabated. The aspirations of millions for equality, justice, peace and development continue to elude us, seven decades after of the establishment of the United Nations. Our commitment to forgiveness, reconciliation, humanity and peace, not just in words but in actions, would be a true tribute to Madiba.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Paul Oquist Kelley, Minister and Private Secretary for National Policies of the Presidency of the Republic of Nicaragua.

Mr. Oquist Kelley (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for Nicaragua to participate in this historic Nelson Mandela Peace Summit in honour of the centenary of the birth of that giant of humankind and lover of inclusion, democracy, tolerance and peace. We endorse the theme and the political declaration of this Summit, which reflects the values of Nelson Mandela, in particular where it says,

> "We also reaffirm our commitment to upholding the sovereign equality of all States, respect for their territorial integrity and political independence and the duty of Member States to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner" and "non-interference in the internal affairs of States."

The Sandinista people's revolution served as a source of inspiration to Nelson Mandela, who said that the Sandinista revolution gave South Africans confidence in their own struggle when they saw the difficult circumstances in which the Sandinistas fought for change in Nicaragua, and that greatly encouraged them. In 1991 there was a historic meeting between Nelson Mandela, President of the African National Congress; Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, National President of the Workers' Party of Brazil; and Commander Daniel Ortega Saavedra, General Secretary of the Sandinista National Liberation Front of Nicaragua, accompanied by our current Vice President, Ms. Rosario Murillo Zambrana. At that meeting Mandela described Commander Daniel Ortega as a hero in South Africa and expressed his certainty that he was a hero for all the democrats and progressives of the world. He assured the Commander of his full support for the Sandinistas, as a progressive force that deserved to be supported by all.

At Madiba's passing, the President Commander Daniel Ortega Saavedra wrote,

> "The world says farewell to a great man, a myth, a legend, a part of the heritage of Africa and of humankind. Nelson Mandela lived every day of his life fighting consistently for peace, brotherhood and human dignity. We feel the enormous loss that his death represents for his heroic people and for African peoples in general. Mandela was their leader in their greatest battles. We know his legacy will prevail and that his life will continue to inspire those of us who believe that a better world is possible."

Nelson Mandela was a great friend to our Sandinista revolution and to the people of Nicaragua. During the 95 years of his life he made history, bequeathing to us principles, values and exemplary practices. In these times of struggle against discrimination, racism, oppression and disrespect for the dignity and self-determination of peoples, his testimony of commitment grows every day, becoming a standard for all of us who love freedom and recognize the inviolable human condition.

Despite the fact that in Latin America and the Caribbean we have reiterated our will to reaffirm ourselves as a zone of peace and sustainable development, the intentions of certain countries to implement their destabilizing plans and coups d'état against our legitimate Governments persist. The legitimate Government of Commander Daniel Ortega has recently been a victim of destabilizing plans and an attempted coup d'état. That failed coup attempt has now been defused and defeated by the courage and conviction of the people of Nicaragua themselves. Since July, victorious, they have restored the peace and calm that we won with great effort over the past 11 years.

Truth is triumphing over the lies and deception levelled at the Government of Nicaragua. Our country has resumed its trajectory towards the peace, stability, security and development that we have been building. That means re-establishing the deteriorating mutual social trust and building peace, which we all know is more than the absence of violence. Moreover, it also requires national reconciliation, which President Nelson Mandela achieved in South Africa and President Ortega accomplished among the national opponents in the counter-revolutionary war of the 1980s. The fact that reconciliation was achieved under President Ortega's leadership following the 10-year war inspires confidence that it will be possible to again bring about a culture of peace and reconciliation, thereby ensuring Nicaragua's future development and security in a culture of peace.

In conclusion, the message that we bring from our free Nicaragua, where we continue to fight the shared battles for a world of peace, harmony and coexisting cultures and for human diversity, is this: we pay tribute to the heroic people of the South Africa Mandela left us, whose tremendous achievements of reconciliation and solidarity continue to inspire and encourage us as well as the world. Long live Nelson Mandela. Long live reconciliation and peace.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Burkina Faso.

Mr. Tiare (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): Burkina Faso is delighted to take part in this Summit convened in honour of our icon, Nelson Mandela.

Following the adoption by the African Union of the 2014-2024 Madiba Nelson Mandela Decade of Reconciliation in Africa, today it is the turn of the United Nations, through the General Assembly, to adopt on 24 September the political declaration declaring the period 2019-2028 the Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace (resolution 73/1). The joy with which the political declaration was adopted amply affirms — were there need to do so — the great admiration and high regard of the United Nations for the critical role that President Nelson Mandela played both in his country and beyond.

At this very moment, as I speak on behalf of my country, Burkina Faso, I am thinking not only of all countries that are dealing with hotbeds of conflict but also especially of all the people — civilians and servicemen — who risk their lives daily in theatres of operations for the cause of peace in the world. I particularly spare a sincere thought for the peoples of the Sahelo-Saharan region, where peace is now disturbed by an asymmetrical war, imposed by evil terrorist forces whose ultimate goal is to destabilize our countries and undermine our development efforts.

The pursuit of peace is ongoing. An analysis of the current world situation clearly shows us that peace in the twenty-first century is inevitably the main quest of our generation. The greatest legacy that we could leave to future generations is to lay the foundations today for its effectiveness and sustainability. From that standpoint, Nelson Mandela's life, struggle and sacrifices must be the guiding lights for all leaders and at all levels.

On 24 September, Nelson Mandela inspired more than 100 Heads of State and Government, who spoke from this rostrum. Everything, or almost everything, has been said about Nelson Mandela, a man of exceptional qualities and a great leader of our time, who taught us that, whatever the situation, it is always possible to forgive.

Mr. Beleffi (San Marino), Vice-President, took the Chair.

What Mandela would ask and expect of us today is to move from words to deeds through our behaviour in following in his steps. The political declaration that we adopted reminds us all of our role in redoubling our efforts for international peace and security, development and human rights and to build a just, peaceful, prosperous, fair world that is open to all and that revives the values defended by Nelson Mandela. Our Organization, the United Nations, has a key role to play in that regard.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Eswatini.

Mr. Kunene (Eswatini): It is an honour for me to address this high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly to commemorate the centenary of an icon — Nelson Mandela, the first black President of the Republic of South Africa, who was born on 18 July.

As evidenced by our gathering here today, we further attest to the fact that Nelson Mandela was an inspirational anti-apartheid revolutionary and a human rights advocate who was globally renowned. He won the Nobel Prize in 1993 for his advocacy for peace, stability and coexistence in South Africa. He sacrificed his life for 27 years in Robben Island prison in order for the people of South Africa to be liberated from apartheid. He was a selfless leader in our time. He believed in freedom for all and equal justice.

The Kingdom of Eswatini applauds the United Nations leadership for convening this merited gathering in the name of Mandela. His appeal transcended colour, creed, age, gender and race, which was one of his greatest lessons to humankind. He accorded respect to both the young and the elderly. As we celebrate his life, we are therefore called upon to live up to his legacy, which lives on to this day, and also to champion humanity and selflessness.

As the world finds itself mired in uncertainty, we believe that the teachings of Madiba, as he was affectionately known, would ring true today. To that end, we note with sadness that one of Madiba's core values — peace — remains elusive in some parts of the globe, including our own beloved continent, Africa. Conflict, racial discrimination, xenophobia, poverty and inequality continue to haunt us.

It is instructive how, upon his assumption of the presidency in 1994, Nelson Mandela sought out a conciliatory approach to his stewardship. He recognized that a divided people are not a desirable circumstance and did his utmost to heal the rifts that had developed with an unexpected and resolute kindness.

The Kingdom of Eswatini joins the world in the spirit of Madiba to reaffirm its commitment to meaningful dialogue as an avenue towards preventing and resolving conflict for the maintenance of peace and security in the world.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Jordan.

Ms. Bahous (Jordan): As we gather to honour the life and values of Nelson Mandela, I would like to start by recalling the words spoken by His Majesty King Abdullah II when the great man of peace passed away. At that time, His Majesty said,

> "In Jordan, we recall Mandela's visit to our country and his partnership with us for peace and development. We share with him a feeling of responsibility for a global future where all people reap the fruits of peace, away from exclusion, poverty and conflict."

Today, we salute Nelson Mandela and his outstanding qualities, his values and his dedication to the service of humankind. We salute his unrelenting efforts to promote peace, justice, equality, democracy and human rights. We salute him today and every day as we work towards peace and stability in the Middle East and strive to find a solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, which remains the crux of the problems in the region. That brave man, Mandela, described the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as the greatest moral issue of our time. Our freedom, he said, is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians.

The only path to ending the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is through a comprehensive settlement based on the two-State solution, which guarantees the establishment of an independent Palestinian State based on the 4 June 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital. The road to peace starts in Jerusalem. That city of peace, which has suffered for too long from occupation, will always remain in the hearts of the billions of believers around the world. Jordan is very proud of the historic Hashemite custodianship of the Islamic and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem, and we will be relentless in countering all attempts aimed at changing the historical Arab, Christian and Muslim identity of the Holy City.

Mandela's words also ring true when it comes to many of the issues facing our region today. He once said,

> "As long as poverty, injustice and gross inequality persist in our world, none of us can truly rest."

Jordan, as the largest refugee-hosting country in the world, continues to work with the international community to mobilize political and financial support to tackle such systemic injustices. Jordan will continue resolutely to mobilize the international community to ensure that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and its services continue sustainably and uninterrupted, so that 500,000 Palestinian children can continue to go to school and thousands of others to receive the necessary social and humanitarian services.

As the Syrian crisis enters its eighth year, we continue to advocate for a comprehensive political solution that is accepted by all components of Syrian society — a solution that guarantees Syria's unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity and the safety of all its citizens. The time has come for all parties to lay down their weapons and give peace a chance to thrive in a peaceful Syria where refugees can voluntarily return without fear to rebuild their homes, communities and schools. Jordan is fully committed to peace and will continue to work with the international community to help resolve the many conflicts across our region and the world, and to help bring about regional and world peace and stability.

The world is facing an unprecedented global terrorist threat that seeks to divide us and destroy the common ideals that bind humankind together: tolerance, mercy, compassion and mutual respect — the very values Mandela to which dedicated his life. The only way to defeat that scourge is for all of us to work together and to win the war of ideas against the ideologies of darkness and destruction. Our Summit today is about the values that maintain peace, harmony, coexistence and shared prosperity. Despite our differences, we can together defend and uphold those values. Mandela's life is a testament to perseverance and conviction, which can create miracles. Together, we must honour his legacy and build a peaceful and prosperous future for all of humankind.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Benin.

Mr. Do Rego (Benin) (*spoke in French*): It is with pride that I take the floor on behalf of the delegation of Benin at this high-level plenary meeting dedicated to the theme of world peace in honour of the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela. I welcome the fact that the General Assembly has included in its agenda prior to the opening of the general debate a commemoration of this great African icon whose legacy is shared by all humankind. Who better than Nelson Mandela could embody the essential values on which the United Nations is based?

The fight against all forms of discrimination, the defence of everyone's fundamental rights, the recognition of diversity as an asset, as well as tolerance, forgiveness, reconciliation and the struggle to recognize the dignity of all people, all form the cornerstone of his commitment to social justice, freedom and peace in South Africa. Through his struggle, Nelson Mandela not only changed the course of history for South Africa, but also contributed to changing the world for the better. He left us a lesson on the power of peace and reconciliation, the importance of forgiveness and respect for the dignity of each and every human being.

Even as the global level of peace continues to deteriorate and inequality widens between countries; as climate change, rapid urbanization, food insecurity and water shortages aggravate the competition for resources, deepening tensions and increasing instability; and as despair seems to be on the rise everywhere, the legacy of Nelson Mandela reminds us that nothing is inevitable if we act boldly and that as long as we are able to rise above our circumstances, we can change the future.

In an Africa that sometimes doubts its capabilities, Nelson Mandela also teaches us that solutions are found, first and foremost, among the women and men of Africa who are resolute in shouldering our responsibilities. He has also left us the legacy of a culture of dialogue as our principal political weapon, rather than violence and deadly confrontation, as well as that of putting general interests first rather than those that are racist, faction-based, ethnic or partisan. Those are the assets that allowed my country, Benin, to implement a peaceful regime change in 1990 and introduce an unprecedented peaceful formula of transition through a coming together of national forces — a formula that was also adopted, with varying levels of success, by a dozen other French-speaking African States.

A long road remains to be travelled in Africa and around the world in order to achieve greater equality of opportunities, emancipation and social justice. The most beautiful homage we can pay to this illustrious person, Nelson Mandela, is to bear his message of hope and continue to uphold the values for which he struggled throughout his entire life. Africa owes immense gratitude to a man of such stature, whose name will be forever etched in the hearts and minds of Africans of every generation.

In these times of inertia, when we sometimes can be insufficiently bold, Nelson Mandela remains the personification of African dignity because he gave substance to the dream of an Africa standing tall, fully itself, that brings its voice and experience to the development and humanization of our planet. It is essential that Nelson Mandela's story be taught to all children in Africa and around the world and that younger generations of Africans use it to nurture their willingness to act for the common good.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Cambodia.

Mr. Ke (Cambodia): I have the honour to address this Hall on the occasion of the United Nations Peace Summit in celebration of the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela.

In his life, Nelson Mandela was a person of strength and character who firmly stood in the face of oppression, ready to challenge it with all his determination and power. Today, he remains a symbol of peace, justice, reconciliation and compromise. He dedicated his life to creating a free and peaceful future for the people of South Africa, while also creating an enabling environment for sustainable peace and development for all.

Mandela's legacy reminds us of the importance of working together. It highlights how cooperation and collaboration can lead to the attainment of mutually beneficial solutions to some of the most difficult problems that the international community faces today. As we declare the period 2019 to 2028 the Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace, I would like to urge all States Members of the United Nations to work together in an ever closer manner to achieve our common objective of safeguarding a peaceful and prosperous future for all.

Indeed, over the past several years, we have set out ambitious goals for ourselves, aiming to address such priority issues as global security, hunger, poverty and climate change, inter alia. As we implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, we must keep our people-centred focus. Cambodia is certain that such an approach will unite the global community around our cause, advancing intercultural understanding while improving relations among States.

Nelson Mandela once said that education is the most powerful tool one can use to change the world for the better. Cambodia fully agrees with this view. My country is committed to lifting people up through education. In fact, our national investment in education programmes has brought peace and stability to our country and contributed to a steadily growing economy that has averaged 7.7 per cent per annum, while also aiding in the dramatic reduction of poverty rates.

Ensuring access to learning provides young people with the knowledge and skills necessary to participate as full members of global society. It reduces rates of violence and extremism and contributes to engaged and caring young people. Investing in education infrastructure and opening avenues of employment gives young people hope for the future, while growing sustainable, people-centred economies. Nelson Mandela was clear when he said that there can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children, and so it is incumbent upon us to ensure that our children live free in peaceful, stable and prosperous societies.

As the global community sets out on the path towards the future we want, we would like to reiterate that sustainable development cannot be realized without peace, and peace cannot be achieved without sustainable development. Indeed, conflict prevention is the prerequisite for securing a safe and prosperous future for our children. Accordingly, the global community must channel its energies into settling disputes peacefully based on negotiation and compromise and in accordance with respect for sovereign equality.

In line with Nelson Mandela's thinking that to live free is to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others, the global community must do its utmost to fully respect the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other such relevant instruments. This will contribute to peaceful coexistence among States and help promote the rule of law at the international level.

As we celebrate the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela, the Royal Government of Cambodia would like to reaffirm its commitment to peace. We are ready to work with all our partners to ensure that future generations live free in a stable and prosperous society.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United Arab Emirates.

Mrs. Nusseibeh (United Arab Emirates): At the outset, I would like to thank Ireland and the Republic of South Africa for their tireless efforts in facilitating the consultations for the political declaration adopted at this summit on the occasion of the centennial anniversary of the birth of Nelson Mandela (resolution 73/1).

In his autobiography, Nelson Mandela said that on his long walk to freedom, he discovered the secret that after climbing a great hill one only finds that there are so many more hills to climb. He dared not linger, for his long walk was not yet ended. We here at the United

Nations are all too cognizant of the hills we have yet to climb. In today's world, with the tremendous challenges and widespread crises that we face, we must remind ourselves of the values of tolerance, compassion and acceptance that bind us. These are the values that Mr. Mandela not only fought for but embodied in his leadership. The United Arab Emirates therefore deeply values the opportunity to honour leaders such as Mandela for their humanity, leaders who fought to advance these values and bring peace and justice not only to their own societies, but also around the world.

Mr. Mandela sought to make the world a better place and champion just causes and human rights for all. He believed in the rights of people everywhere to self-determination, the importance of the peaceful resolution of disputes and the imperative of abiding by the United Nations Charter and international law. These principles are the same ones that our leadership in the United Arab Emirates believe in and work to uphold around the world. In fact, Mr. Mandela shared a close personal relationship with the founding father and first President of the United Arab Emirates, His Highness Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan, which was based on their life-long dedication to humanitarianism and shared values that they worked to advance not only in their respective countries, but around the world.

Not only did they share this enlightened vision, they shared a birth year: 2018 is the centennial of both Mr. Mandela's and Sheikh Zayed's births. Our nation therefore celebrates the shared centenary of these two great leaders this year, and on occasions like today's, it is necessary not only to remind ourselves of the values and principles established by our leaders, but also to invest in these values so as to strengthen our international efforts to build peace, strength and security and to fight poverty, racism and persecution wherever they exist.

To that end, the United Arab Emirates believes that we must focus on the following core principles espoused by Mr. Mandela. First, we must intensify efforts aimed at combating extremism and terrorism and promote a culture based on tolerance and acceptance. Secondly, we must strengthen diplomacy to resolve conflicts, including through dialogue, confidence-building among Governments and support for the United Nations. Thirdly, we must empower women and young people to make them effective partners in building peaceful and inclusive societies. Fourthly, we must resolve the root causes of crises rather than simply managing them. In this regard, we must promote innovation and the use of technology to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Finally, we must renew the commitments of States to international law and the United Nations Charter, which includes holding States that violate principles and norms truly accountable for their actions.

The United Arab Emirates will continue to promote these steps through its foreign policy and international leadership and to work with the United Nations and regional and international partners to advance development, prosperity and progress for all people and to build a more peaceful future for generations to come.

As Sheikh Zayed said,

> "There is no glory without the glory of the country and its citizens. We have to be proud of our forefathers, who were able to face the harshness of life with a strong will and dedication to shape a better collective future".

It is in precisely that spirit that today we honour Nelson Mandela, who, more than most of us can imagine, faced the harshness of life, but whose compassion, righteousness and goodness inspire us to carry his work forward.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Thailand.

Mr. Prongthura (Thailand): I am honoured to be here today, representing the Kingdom of Thailand, at this gathering to commemorate Mr. Mandela's selfless contribution to the greater good of humankind and to join others in expressing our determination to follow in his footsteps in our collective pursuit to sustain global peace.

To achieve what Mr. Mandela started, we have to promote a culture of peace and non-violence. We have to foster mutual respect, tolerance and understanding among peoples. If and when conflict inevitably arises our efforts to bring about reconciliation must be based upon wisdom and truth, not on repression or suppression. True reconciliation must be accompanied by acceptance and forgiveness. Peace will stand a better chance if lessons are learned and mistakes are not repeated.

We must realize that conflict is born out of human minds and occurs when people are not free of fear or want. To prevent and to end conflict, we must free people from fear. We must also free people from want, and we need to protect human rights and ensure that people live with dignity. We need to promote development so that humankind can reach its potential. We must also recognize that peace is not just about the absence of conflict. Peace can be sustained only by addressing the root causes of conflict through inclusive and participatory dialogue. We must therefore encourage multi-stakeholder engagement and constructive partnerships in which everyone has a chance to contribute actively to lasting peace and their own futures. We must also pass the values of sustaining peace on to our children, for they are the agents of change that will shape the future of this world.

To keep the torch of Mr. Mandela's aspiration burning, Thailand will always support the work of the United Nations on sustaining peace and sustainable development. We will continue to work to realize the Sustainable Development Goals and to leave no one behind.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Italy.

Mrs. Zappia (Italy): It is an honour for me to address this Peace Summit dedicated to the memory of Nelson Mandela, a man who shaped the history of our time. He truly embodied the values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

In Madiba we do not only celebrate the unrelenting leader of the struggle, we also remember him for the way he pursued peace and reconciliation with those who persecuted him the most, and for how he led the way to the refoundation of South Africa as the rainbow nation.

Throughout his life, President Mandela's actions were always guided by the objectives of ending war and maintaining peace and security in the world, affirming justice and social progress and promoting human rights and dignity. Protecting and promoting human rights is a priority for Italy. Italy's candidature for the Human Rights Council for the term 2019-2021 is based on that commitment. We are inspired by Nelson Mandela's example in our commitment against all forms of discrimination; in promoting the rights of women and children; implementing the universal moratorium on the death penalty; promoting religious freedom and protecting the rights of religious minorities; fighting against human trafficking; promoting the rights of persons with disabilities; protecting human rights defenders; and protecting cultural heritage.

In our efforts to promote the dignity of the individual and fight human trafficking, we are among those that believe that migration is a global phenomenon that cannot be managed by one country alone. Building on our experience, Italy has contributed to the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration, which is based on respect for the fundamental human rights of migrating persons, shared responsibility and true partnerships among countries of origin, transit and destination.

As a son of the African continent, Nelson Mandela was instrumental in laying the groundwork for the relationship between Africa and the rest of the world. Because of our history, geography and cultural traditions, Italy has always had a strong and profound relationship with Africa. Over the years, our development cooperation has led us to devote significant resources to the continent and, because we believe in Africa's future, Italy is the sixth-largest investor in the continent. Italy is also assisting many African countries with training and capacity-building programmes, from Libya to the Sahel and the Horn, in different areas, as identified in agreement with local authorities and in full respect of the principle of African ownership of crisis management.

The upcoming Italy-Africa ministerial conference, which represents the highest-level structured framework of the partnership established between Italy and Africa, will take place in Rome on 24 and 25 October. That second conference will be a further occasion to celebrate Nelson Mandela's legacy. It will focus on Africa's economic growth; our enhanced concerted efforts to promote peace on the continent; and the promotion of human development. That high-level dialogue will enable us to strengthen the cooperation between Italy and Africa towards reaching the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 of the African Union.

Today, I want to reaffirm Italy's strong commitment to building on Nelson Mandela's legacy as a driving force of our collective efforts towards peace, justice and prosperity. On the centenary of his birth, I wish to pay homage to all the women and men who walked together with him towards freedom and justice.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Myanmar.

U Aung Lynn (Myanmar): Allow me first to join other speakers in commending the President for having convened this very important Peace Summit.

Myanmar wishes to endorse the statements delivered by the representative of Singapore, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and by the representative of Venezuela, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/73/PV.5).

We also express our appreciation to the Permanent Representatives of South Africa and Ireland for having facilitated the political declaration adopted at this Summit (resolution 73/1). Myanmar pays tribute to the great contribution of Nelson Mandela, Madiba, for his long struggle for freedom in South Africa and for his aspiration and dedication to promoting the culture of peace throughout the entire world.

As we honour the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela, we fondly remember his words on peace and reconciliation:

> "In the end, reconciliation is a spiritual process which requires more than just a legal framework. It has to happen in the hearts and minds of people".

Those valuable words are very precious to us, as Myanmar is working very hard to achieve lasting peace through national reconciliation with a view to building a democratic federal union.

Furthermore, in support of Nelson Mandela's efforts to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons, Myanmar is pleased to inform the Assembly that we signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons during the treaty event held during the seventy-third session of the General Assembly.

May I conclude by saying that the people of Myanmar will always remember Nelson Mandela as the champion of peace, democracy and social justice. We express our strong support for Madiba's spirit of peace and reconciliation, which will remain as his lasting legacy for our future generations.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Philippines.

Mr. Locsin (Philippines): It is an absolute honour and privilege to be here today at the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit, not only to honour one of the most influential political figures that the world has seen, but also to commemorate his legacy as a freedom fighter, a nation-builder and a global icon through the political declaration that all Member States adopted this morning (resolution 73/1).

Nelson Mandela, or Madiba, embodied the highest ideals of humanity: courage and compassion, humility and harmony, intelligence and integrity, respect and reconciliation, tolerance and a total commitment to justice. From prisoner to President, Mandela's larger-than-life story is about the power of reconciliation. He demonstrated that hope is a powerful weapon, a peaceful force for peace. He displayed strength of character and steely determination to overcome apartheid. He showed, in the face of cruelty and injustice, what is truly possible when the rule of law triumphs over prejudice. It is said that Mr. Mandela credited his prison experience with teaching him the strategies that would make him President, for in weakness there is strength and in defeat, one finds the means to a greater victory.

Eighteen years ago, New York City warmly welcomed Mr. Mandela. Almost a million New Yorkers lined the streets of Brooklyn, Manhattan and Queens to catch a glimpse of the man. As the first President of post-apartheid South Africa, Mr. Mandela delivered a landmark speech before the General Assembly, stating that:

> "The millions across our globe who stand expectant at the gates of hope look to this Organization to bring them peace, to bring them life, to bring them a life worth living." (*A/49/PV.14, p. 10*)

President Mandela paid a State visit to the Philippines in March 1998. Ever since then, Filipinos have looked up to Mr. Mandela as the inspiration for action for the betterment of humankind. He never stopped working on the things that matter. On the occasion of his birthday in July 2007, Mr. Mandela founded The Elders in Johannesburg as a group of independent global leaders. He mandated the group to support courage where there is fear, foster agreement where there is conflict, and inspire hope where there is despair.

Mr. Mandela embodied the highest values of the United Nations — social justice, the promotion and protection of human rights, the fight against poverty and discrimination and, always, peace and freedom foremost. The life and legacy of Madiba is about self-sacrifice, constructive reconciliation and an unwavering commitment to freedom. These are pursuits that are difficult to attain but, as Mandela might say, it always seems impossible until it is done.

The challenges for all of us remain: to envision all possibilities where none seems to exist and to continue to work for a just, inclusive and better world.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Oman.

Mr. Al Towaiya (Oman) (*spoke in Arabic*): Today I am addressing the Assembly on behalf of the delegation of my country, the Sultanate of Oman. We are participating in this important session focusing on global peace to commemorate the birth centenary of the late Nelson Mandela, who was well known for his courage, humanity and tolerance.

We participate in this Summit today because we have high regard for our relations with friendly South Africa. We commend Mandela's strong human and ethical values, which made him an international leader who transcended his country and continent. He devoted himself to the service of humankind and humanitarian issues and to promoting the culture of peace throughout the world while supporting Arab causes, in particular the Palestinian question.

In that regard, I would like to mention that Nelson Mandela paid a visit to the Sultanate in 1999, during which he met with His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said. That visit marked an important milestone in the bilateral relations between the Sultanate and South Africa — a relationship that we greatly value.

This Summit is an opportunity for us to reflect on the life and legacy of the late Nelson Mandela, as it reminds us of the responsibility of the United Nations to achieve and maintain peace.

A few days ago, my country underscored from this rostrum that dialogue and negotiations are the best means of finding solutions to conflicts and that peace is the very foundation of stability and development. Nelson Mandela affirmed this belief by saying:

> "Negotiations and discussion are the greatest weapons we have for promoting peace and development".

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

Mr. Yelchenko (Ukraine): Ukraine appreciates the initiative to hold this Summit. It is a timely opportunity for Member States and the United Nations leadership to consider measures to promote peace, security and human rights and their interconnection, as well as the role played by Nelson Mandela in shaping the modern world.

Mandela's legacy proves that the power of personal courage, integrity, self-confidence, self-sacrifice and leadership can be much more powerful than the power of a country. The speech that Nelson Mandela gave the day he walked out of prison reaffirmed the same demands he made to the Government on the day he was sentenced to jail. After 27 years, he walked out of prison proud and unbroken. Despite 27 years in jail, he knew that anger could tear his country further apart, so instead he chose nation-building over revenge.

> "Recognize that the world is hungry for action, not words. Act with courage and vision."

These are the words of a true leader.

Ukraine is proud to always have been true friend and defender of human rights, especially at the time of the Republic of South Africa's first democratic presidential elections, in 1994, when Nelson Mandela was elected President. Ukraine was also actively engaged in the activities of the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid and served as Vice-Chair of that body for many years in ensuring the restoration of justice in South Africa.

In this connection, let me recall — as just one element of this — the unique experience of Ukraine's participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations in Africa, including in Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, South Sudan and the Sudan.

Nowadays, despite foreign aggression, Ukraine is continuing with its proud duty as a contributor to peacekeeping operations in the African region. Looking back on the more than 25 years of history of Ukraine's participation in United Nations peacekeeping activities, I am particularly proud that Blue Helmets from Ukraine were a part of the operations that contributed so much to peace in Africa, from the introduction of robust peacekeeping in Côte d'Ivoire to the most recent success story, in Liberia. We remain a reliable partner of the United Nations and of Africa in this endeavour.

Furthermore, increased attention on the part of the Security Council to peacemaking and peacebuilding on the African continent was among the main priorities for

Ukraine during its non-permanent membership in that body in 2016-2017.

Peace and security and respect for human rights are closely linked. We support those who declare that human rights violations must be considered as an early warning of future instability and conflicts, and we are committed to ensuring that greater attention is given to human rights during discussions in the relevant United Nations formats. In this regard, Ukraine has consistently promoted Human Rights Council resolutions on the role of prevention in the promotion and protection of human rights.

Turning back to Nelson Mandela, we are glad that his heritage continues to enrich the world, even after his passing. A true recognition of his personal strength was the adoption of the revised United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners in 2015, also known as the Nelson Mandela Rules. It is a true honour for all of us to share the legacy of Madiba today.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Lithuania.

Ms. Plepytė (Lithuania): It is an honour for me to participate in this high-level event dedicated to promoting the legacy of Nelson Mandela. Because of his determination to fight for what is right, Nelson Mandela has become a synonym for tolerance, non-discrimination, dialogue and reconciliation, peace and stability, respect for diversity and the promotion of human rights. These are the values that humankind sorely needs in today's world.

By celebrating the life and legacy of Nelson Mandela, we are commemorating the anniversary of the most important human rights instrument, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Nelson Mandela devoted his life to the promotion and protection of human rights. He fought against racial and other forms of discrimination and promoted gender equality and the rights of children and people in vulnerable situations — all of the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In looking at the legacy of Nelson Mandela to future generations, we should ask ourselves if we have done everything to preserve and promote human rights. Have we been able to step outside of our comfort zones and uphold the international principles of equality, justice and human dignity? These questions are essential today.

The democratic space is shrinking, and human rights are being denied by the falsification of security needs. Populism also plays a part when human rights are limited in the pursuit of fake promises. Neither sustainable peace nor security can be achieved without respect for human rights and those who defend them. We must recommit to the ideals enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and revive the values that Nelson Mandela stood for.

Lithuania is committed to the goals set out in the Political Declaration (resolution 73/1), which can provide new impetus for the promotion of Nelson Mandela's legacy. We must strive for just, peaceful, prosperous, democratic and equitable societies based on the rule of law and the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms. The best way to celebrate the centenary of Nelson Mandela's birth is with a commitment to building total, just and lasting peace with unconditional tolerance, understanding and reconciliation in our relations.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Latvia.

Mr. Pildegovičs (Latvia): It is an honour to be part of the commemoration of the legacy of Nelson Mandela on his centenary. He was a man of great wisdom and courage who has become a global symbol of freedom and peace. He continues to inspire all generations. It is very important that, at a time when we are facing many global challenges, we all come together to reflect on the much-needed global peace strongly pursued by Nelson Mandela throughout his lifetime. Latvia supports the political declaration adopted at this Summit (resolution 73/1), and we hope that all countries will embrace the principles and values therein.

Peace cannot be taken for granted. It is at risk in many places around the globe, with conflicts, tensions and terrorism leaving serious wounds on our collective consciousness. We must fight for peace. We must translate our commitments to end conflicts and the devastation of our peoples into clear priorities and concrete actions. Nelson Mandela said:

> "It always seems impossible until it is done"

and

> "real leaders must be ready to sacrifice all for the freedom of their peoples".

In the early 1990s, Nelson Mandela rejected violence and steered South Africa — a country in turmoil — towards a negotiated settlement aimed at ending the era of apartheid and lay the foundation for reconciliation and a truly inclusive democracy. These transformational changes in South Africa occurred alongside the historic liberation of the former captive nations in Central and Eastern Europe. During the peaceful and non-violent independence movement known as the Singing Revolution, the peoples of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania ultimately succeeded in overcoming the brutal foreign occupation and totalitarian regime that had lasted for more than 50 years.

Since the restoration of its independence and joining the United Nations in September 1991, Latvia has been a staunch supporter of international law and promoter of democracy and human rights. These principles are fundamental in maintaining an international order based on predictability, stability and the security of States. There are great expectations for the United Nations, as the only truly universal organization, to meet the growing challenges to peace, development and human rights and deliver results effectively. Latvia is a strong advocate of multilateralism and believes that we must all work together to restore trust in the multilateral system's ability to deliver solutions to pressing global issues.

Latvia sees conflict prevention as the backbone of the United Nations agenda. As we mark the seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it is important to remind ourselves that human rights and the promotion of tolerance within society are the best tools for the prevention of violent conflict, because inclusive societies guarantee peace and security. With an effective and accountable justice system and institutions in place and with fundamental freedoms, including freedom of speech and association, every society can thrive. Latvia will continue to promote and protect these values both at home and internationally.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, combatants accounted for 90 per cent of conflict-related casualties. Today 90 per cent of casualties in armed conflicts are civilians. Conventional weapons kill approximately 500,000 people per year, 70,000 of them in conflict zones. These figures clearly prove that the international community must focus not only on weapons of mass destruction, but also on conventional weapons. With that in mind, Latvia will assume the presidency of the Arms Trade Treaty next year and will spare no effort to promote its objectives. I call on all States to become parties to the Treaty, which would also contribute directly to the legacy of Nelson Mandela and to the attainment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development's Sustainable Development Goals.

This year Latvia is celebrating the centenary of the modern democratic republic. Latvia's greatest resource is our people. Those who sacrificed their lives for freedom and those who have dedicated their lives to the creation and maintenance of an independent State have created our present reality with the work they do on a daily basis. Together with the new generation, they are laying the foundation for our future.

To reiterate my message I would like to quote the great Latvian poet Rainis, who said in 1911, "We are as great as is our will".

The awareness of this simple truth has followed Latvians through an entire century of joy and suffering, destruction and renewal. This simple, succinct truth expresses the essence of our national will: belief in our strength and the desire to be free. Today we can also achieve all that we believe in.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan.

Mr. Hashmi (Pakistan): Nelson Mandela's name is synonymous with struggle, reconciliation, peaceful coexistence and respect for others. His charisma, stoic optimism and undying spirit to help the oppressed made him one of the world's most recognizable statesmen of the twentieth century and a hero of South African democracy. His legacy continues to reverberate around the world. As we are gathered here to celebrate that great statesman, who stood for peace and unity, we see around us a world that is hardly at peace and in which conflicts abound, human rights abuses remain rampant and humanitarian laws are flouted in open violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We must learn from Madiba and see how his legacy can guide us in navigating the troubled waters of international peace and security today.

One of Nelson Mandela's priorities was ending poverty. Despite the important progress made in our fight against extreme poverty, hunger, illiteracy and disease, the dividends of those gains continue to be unequally distributed. Inequality, exclusion and lack of opportunity continue to blight the hopes and aspirations of millions of people, especially women and girls. Similarly, internecine violence and conflict continue to undermine the prospects of peace and stability throughout many parts of the world. Protracted conflicts have also spawned unprecedented humanitarian crises, if not emergencies. Prolonged conflicts cannot be wished away. The Jammu-Kashmir dispute is one such scar on the face of the United Nations. Addressing the Summit Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries in Durban in 1998, Mandela said,

> "All of us remain concerned that the issue of Jammu and Kashmir should be solved through peaceful negotiations and should be willing to lend all the strength we have to the resolution of this matter".

We must pay heed to such voices if we are serious about peace and Mandela's legacy.

At a time when international cooperation is most needed to address the myriad interrelated and mutually reinforcing challenges, the world is becoming more divided and polarized. Mandela devoted his life to the service of his people and humankind, and he did so at great personal sacrifice. He chose the path of reconciliation and cooperation, while leaving behind a powerful legacy of reconciliation and diversity together with resistance to economic and other inequalities. We must use the power of peace and reconciliation and learn about the importance of forgiveness and respect for the dignity of all people. The greatest tribute that we can pay him is to carry on his message of hope and continue to defend the values for which he stood. That is not an easy task, but let us always remember Madiba's often-quoted lesson:

> "It always seems impossible until it is done".

Let us pledge to work with that undying spirit.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Burundi.

Mr. Shingiro (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): Burundi welcomes the convening on 24 September of the high-level plenary meeting entitled "Nelson Mandela Peace Summit", organized, as all here are aware, in accordance with resolution 72/243, of 22 December 2017, which my country, Burundi, fully endorsed. Through the holding of this summit, held following the centenary of his birth, on 18 July, Burundi pays a well-deserved tribute to a statesman who made his mark on world history through his dedication to the struggle for freedom, equality and dignity not only for South Africa, but also for the entire world.

As a result of his singular achievements, Madiba's light continues to shine brightly throughout the world, burning through every cloud. Nelson Mandela's exemplary sense of courage, determination, love, self-sacrifice and compassion continues to be a source of inspiration for the entire world. His legacy shows us the path ahead and encourages us to pursue the struggle to achieve equality, dignity and justice with the same dedication and tenacity that he demonstrated throughout his entire life, without ever showing any sign of fatigue or resignation despite the 27 long years he spent in prison. In his youth, Nelson Mandela preferred to devote his energy to forgiveness and reconciliation, working towards realizing his model of a peaceful, multi-ethnic, multicultural, democratic and definitively unified and reconciled South Africa. He is today the indisputable symbol of shared universal values such as peace, forgiveness, humility, integrity, patience, generosity, respect and sincerity, among countless others.

Burundi also welcomes the fact that every year on 18 July, Nelson Mandela International Day provides us with a unique opportunity to reflect on the legacy of that iconic figure in the struggle for liberty, in particular his call for solidarity and mutually respectful international cooperation. It is that sense of duty towards others that drove Nelson Mandela to risk his life to save the lives of others. He confronted his oppressors while in prison, in court and in the street, knowing full well that they had the power of life or death over him. He refused to back down or resign himself despite the peril that hovered over him. He sacrificed a major part of his life so that others could live in peace, dignity, freedom, tolerance, equality and mutual respect among the formerly oppressed and those who had oppressed them. He was an infallible guide lighting the way and today remains an example for the whole world to follow, as we strive to pursue his work in the service of humankind. The best way of paying him well-deserved tribute would be to reverse the current trends towards the fragmentation and polarization of the international community through dynamic, sincere and equitable multilateralism.

In conclusion, I would be remiss if I did not remind the Assembly that, throughout his struggle, Nelson Mandela showed us that dialogue and negotiations must be pursued tirelessly, regardless of the nature of the divisions in question. All the peoples of the world have the opportunity today to remember Mandela's legacy, which is written in words of gold. His charisma, unifying leadership, integrity, humility, sincerity and combative spirit for achieving freedom, equality and dignity for all led to the liberation of the people of South Africa from the yoke of the racist apartheid regime and that of other Africans from repressive regimes. In that regard, the people of Burundi are particularly grateful to him for his personal commitment to the inter-Burundi peace process, which led to the Arusha Peace Agreement in 2000, the subsequent comprehensive ceasefire agreements and the end of a years-long civil war pitting the people of Burundi against their brothers.

On the occasion of the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit, let us all, as an international community, take advantage of this opportunity to condemn and reject the rise of intolerance, hatred, racism, prejudice, discrimination and the trend of radical unilateralism in order to make our world a haven of peace where the peoples of the world may live and cooperate in perfect harmony and in complementarity.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Chile.

Mr. Skoknic Tapia (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Five years after the passing of Nelson Mandela, the best tribute we can pay to his legacy is to gather here at a Peace Summit that bears his name. The perspective that Mandela's birth gives us allows us to be mindful of the changes in the notion of peace and security, especially in terms of the threats thereto.

This occasion is also an opportunity for all of us to reaffirm our commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on its seventieth anniversary. To a large extent, traditional threats to peace and security have been replaced by new threats that are not always of a State or military nature — a paradigm change that has convinced us that a multidimensional approach is the best way to address conflicts. Causes include socioeconomic, gender-related, ethnic, tribal, religious and ideological tensions that may have a local, regional or global impact. Such a multidimensional approach, with an emphasis on prevention, allows us to see that peace is intimately linked to development. As the Assembly has reiterated on multiple occasions, sustainable development cannot be achieved without peace and security, while peace and security are at risk without the achievement of sustainable development. Chile is of the view that peace and development are closely linked, and, in the light of the foregoing, a cooperative approach with a broad vision is essential when dealing with threats of a global nature. Chile is therefore firmly committed to cooperating, through its technical and human resources, in all multilateral, universal and regional forums in order to contribute to resolving the problems that threaten nations.

In terms of development cooperation, one of the ways that Chile remembers Nelson Mandela is through the scholarship bearing his name. The objective of that scholarship and that collaboration is to contribute to the development of advanced human capital for Africa, allowing students from all over that continent to graduate from Chilean universities. Since the scholarship's creation, in 2014, more than 100 students from the African continent have benefited therefrom.

I would conclude by saying that Chile is a peaceful country that is resolutely committed to globalization and to a world order that, to be legitimate, must be consistently governed by multilaterally negotiated rules. Our outward-looking development model requires global conditions of peace and security that effectively allow the widest possible circulation of people, goods and services.

We view international security as a global public good that must be provided by all States, whatever their size, population or military power. For that reason, we believe that all members of the international community should participate in the quest for global solutions to major global threats.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United States of America.

Mr. McCulley (United States of America): It is a great honour to be here today as we celebrate the life and accomplishments of Nelson Mandela, who devoted almost 70 years of his life to helping to transform South Africa into a better version of itself and who left the world a legacy to cherish and remember. As one of the twentieth century's greatest visionaries, Nelson Mandela demonstrated to the world the strength of the human spirit to overcome adversity. His legacy transcends boundaries and will continue to bring people closer for generations to come in the fight for justice and equality around the world.

Nelson Mandela was no stranger to immense adversity and hardship. And yet he never stopped pursuing the justice and equality that he knew all people deserve. Madiba fought to defend a universal human dignity and to create a brighter future for succeeding generations. This Summit is a powerful manifestation of President Mandela's vision of the world coming together and recognizing, amid our profound disagreements, the universality of our common cause to build a better future for humankind.

Through holding this event, we are better and more appropriately able to honour the memory of Nelson Mandela by improving the world. Despite decades of imprisonment, Nelson Mandela's belief in freedom and human dignity was unbreakable. He maintained his faith, not only in his cause but in the humanity of his fellow countrymen, including his oppressors. President Mandela demonstrated that even after enduring unimaginable adversity, great leaders can govern with fairness and honesty and build a better future for their countries and for humankind.

President Mandela also did not shy away from shining a spotlight on corruption and the abuse of power. In April 1964, in his famous speech, entitled: "I am prepared to die", given from the defence dock in a trial where he faced the real possibility of a death sentence, he publicly indicted a corrupt and unjust system of State-sponsored oppression. He knew instinctively that focusing public attention on oppression and injustice would turn opinion towards the peacemaker and human rights activist. He knew that the inherent fairness and decency of informed human beings would lead to the defeat of tyranny, the spread of democracy and the development of strong, just institutions that preserve the rights of every citizen. We have expressed our concerns with parts of the political declaration that was adopted last week, and we will continue to share our views on a host of issues in the weeks to come. But let us proceed under the wisdom of Mandela's legacy to elevate the objectives of our dialogue.

Through Nelson Mandela's example, we know that change can occur when actions and messages of respect and peace are used instead of violence and division. May we ever strive to follow and continue to learn from Nelson Mandela on how we should forgive when it comes to the past and forge ahead towards a future where all humankind can share rights and privileges that are not reserved solely for the few. Nelson Mandela was a beacon of hope in this world and a testament to the fact that peace and profound growth are possible anywhere. In honour of the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit, we join our fellow representatives in reflecting on his legacy of striving for progress, peace, justice and equality for all.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Poland.

Mr. Radomski (Poland): I am honoured and proud to represent Poland at the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit. Indeed, this is a particularly important occasion, not only for our dear friends and partners from South Africa but — I will not hesitate to say it — for all the people of the world.

Nelson Mandela's personality and his legacy of peaceful transformation from the oppressive apartheid regime to a democratic South Africa remind me of two dates from our own Polish history. Some moments during the past century were surprisingly similar to the long walk to freedom of South Africa and other African countries. A few months after the birth of Nelson Mandela — when the horrors of the First World War had just ended — on 11 November 1918 Poland regained its independence after 123 years of partition and oppression by the three empires, namely, Russia, Germany and Austria. This year we therefore celebrate both centenaries, of Nelson Mandela's birth and of the resurrection of Poland in 1918.

There are more historical parallels, however. The years 1989 and 1994 marked the other important dates and similarities between Poland and South Africa. We Poles threw off the bloody yoke of communism in 1989, and only five years later Nelson Mandela became the first democratically elected President of South Africa, ending the thoroughly unfair and brutal apartheid regime.

Let me say this clearly and forcefully: the heritage of Nelson Mandela and the histories of both South Africa and Poland should serve as a reminder and warning for all those who do not abide by the rules of democracy or respect human dignity, the right to self-determination and the sovereignty of all countries around the world.

Let us remember the great personality and legacy of Nelson Mandela. It should inspire us today to contribute further to a cessation of hostilities and raging wars and to act against aggression and hatred in our world today, for which we are all responsible.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Mr. Schulz (Germany): I thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this high-level plenary meeting in honour of the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela.

Nelson Mandela was a champion in so many ways, and his contributions to overcoming apartheid, discrimination and oppression were legendary. The same is true for his dedication to human rights, development and freedom. From early on he emphasized the importance of empowering women and youth. Today we are challenged by a new wave of populism, discrimination and violence, as our multilateral order is increasingly coming under threat. Madiba's life and values can help guide us through those challenges. This commemoration is therefore called to apply his values and actions to today's problems.

Germany wholeheartedly supports the declaration we adopted last week (resolution 73/1) and thanks South Africa and Ireland for their leadership in drafting it.

Germany aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union during the first part of this meeting.

The integration of prevention and sustaining peace into the work of the United Nations was long overdue. For us, prevention is the foundation of building and sustaining peace. Both are key issues in our multilateral work. At the national level Germany has spelled out its policy on prevention and stabilization in our guidelines on preventing crisis, resolving conflict and building peace. This is the first time that Germany has defined its peace policy in this way: we are fully committed to the primacy of politics and the priority of prevention. We have tripled our budget for crisis prevention, stabilization and humanitarian assistance, and we are proud to currently co-chair the Peacebuilding Commission.

The year 2019 will mark the start of the Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace, and Germany will serve on the Security Council starting in January. Strengthening the Council's work in conflict prevention and conflict resolution remains a top priority for Germany. Germany will also prioritize human rights and the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda during our time on the Council.

Speaking about women's empowerment, I think it is appropriate to commemorate the struggle of the South African women who fought alongside Tata Mandela. I would like to mention one of them in particular, Albertina Sisulu. Her life reminds us that women play an essential role in the struggle for a more peaceful world. That belief is why Germany will continue to promote women's empowerment across the United Nations. That is how we can carry on the legacy of Nelson Mandela and his dedication to freedom, democracy, human rights and the empowerment of women. We believe that they are the only way to create lasting peace and stability.

In today's world, Madiba reminds us all, maybe more than ever, that those are the guiding principles for the United Nations and that decency is not a sign of weakness.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Mounzer (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): The late Nelson Mandela — a great warrior in South Africa's struggle and President of that country — left us a glorious legacy and is a source of pride for all peoples opposing foreign occupation, fighting for their independence and sovereignty over their national territory, and combating terrorism and extremism. Nelson Mandela spent 27 years of his life in the apartheid prisons in South Africa. Following his release, he spent the rest of his life fighting tirelessly to maintain freedom and independence in his country, to defend it and to defend his values and principles in the service of humankind.

My country, Syria, supported Nelson Mandela and his struggle when he was detained in apartheid prisons. We are proud to say that we have our own Syrian Mandela, a man by the name of Sidqi Sleiman Al-Makt, a Syrian prisoner who, like Mandela, spent 27 years of his life in prison — Israeli prisons, in his case. He was arrested once again by the Israeli occupying authorities and sentenced to 14 additional years in prison because he exposed Israel's support for terrorist groups in the divided Golan.

Regrettably, the quest for peace will be in vain as long as policies exist that support hegemony, occupation and terrorism while covering up the crimes committed by terrorists. It will be in vain as long as such policies impose unilateral coercive measures amid rising radicalism and the discourse of hatred and racism. It will be in vain as long as many of our peoples continue to pay with their blood the price of colonial ambitions, international terrorism and proxy wars, in addition to illegal alliances that, through their crimes and acts of aggression, undermine the great developmental and structural achievements that were achieved over many decades. It will be in vain as long as certain States continue to exacerbate and prolong crises in order to serve their own interests rather than find peaceful solutions to them.

Unfortunately, the picture is bleak when we talk about world peace in the presence of States that seek to undermine international peace and security rather than maintain it. How many States have been destroyed under the pretext of possessing weapons of mass destruction, the responsibility to protect or spreading democracy? The list is endless.

The challenges we face today make our mission as the United Nations even more difficult and our responsibility greater. Consequently, the required collective efforts must be intensified to ensure that peace prevails over hegemony, terrorism, extremism and hatred. That requires respect for the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, which underscores respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States, as well as non-interference in their internal affairs.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Chad.

Mr. Moustapha (Chad) (*spoke in French*): I welcome the holding of today's Peace Summit to commemorate the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela. I am very proud to speak on behalf of my country, Chad, on this occasion to honour the memory of this great man and leader whom the world continues to celebrate.

The stature and political career of Nelson Mandela serve as an invitation to continue the struggle for our peoples. Madiba's commitment to peace, security and harmony transcended the borders of his country, South Africa, and was known throughout the world. That is why his faith in peace and social justice inspires us all to take action, in particular in a country such as Chad, which has experienced decades of conflict. Peace, security and social justice are yet to be achieved in many regions, such as the Lake Chad basin region and the Sahel, where terrorist groups and trafficking networks of all kinds jeopardize the safety of goods and people and threaten the stability of countries. In addition, major vulnerabilities and poverty in such regions are another destabilizing factor in the area of peace and security. Abject poverty, which forces men and women to live on less than $1 a day, remains one of the greatest injustices of our time.

Although resources abound and technical means exist, food insecurity threatens millions of human beings throughout the world. The peaceful world that Nelson Mandela ardently advocated is one that eliminates hunger and malnutrition. The peaceful world Madiba called for allows children to be housed, educated and realize their equal right to participate so as to ensure that peace, harmony, tolerance and compassion continue to prevail. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 of the African Union are responses to the challenges of poverty and the manifold and multidimensional threats. We commend the tireless efforts of the United Nations and the African Union to implement the promising commitments made under such initiatives. We support them because they constitute the best way to overcome the scourge of poverty and abject poverty in the world and ensure peace. There can be no peace without development.

However, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals depends entirely upon marshalling financial resources, without which the 2030 Agenda will remain but a litany of woes and an unfulfilled list of desires. Therefore, on this solemn occasion, we call upon the donor community and all Member States to work together to ensure that our world becomes a better place. In doing so we would be honouring both the commitments we made and the memory of Nelson Mandela.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Iraq.

Mr. Bahr Aluloom (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the people and the Government of the Republic of Iraq, I would like at the outset to express my gratitude to those who participated in organizing this Peace Summit to commemorate the ideas of the late leader Nelson Mandela, who said,

> "To be free is not merely to cast off your chains, but to live in dignity that respects the freedom of others."

As peoples of different States, we live in a diversified and multilateral world in terms of cultures, ideologies, religions and ethnicities. Hence we must deal with all of those differences based on respect for the rights and freedoms of others in order to maintain our own rights and freedoms. Diversity and difference have been a way of life from the dawn of creation and enrich our shared human legacy.

Nelson Mandela's ideals and his struggle against all forms of racial discrimination in the Republic of South Africa are a beacon that illuminates the path of all parties pursuing respect for the principles of human rights as an approach to the future of peoples. The broad participation of the international community at today's Summit attests to the fact that Member States have adopted Mandela's ideas, given their global nature. We believe that the rule of law requires that procedures and institutions, as well as legal norms, reflect respect for human rights. The rule of law is closely linked to the protection of human rights. Human rights can never be protected in communities without the rule of law, as it is the only mechanism that activates such rights in order to transform them from mere principles to reality, by laying the foundations of democratic governance on international principles.

The Iraqi Constitution adopted in 2005 encompasses the basic principles that acknowledge a broad range of rights and freedoms for all people, in line with international humanitarian principles. Our Constitution prohibits the enactment of any law that contravenes the fundamental principles of freedoms and prohibits any entity or approach that endorses racism, terrorism, takfirism or sectarian cleansing.

In collaboration with the international community and the United Nations, the Government of Iraq is working diligently to eradicate the remnants of extremism that threaten international peace and security. It does so by implementing institutional reform programmes, fighting all forms of discrimination, building national capacity, applying the principle of gender equality, empowering women and youth and providing equal opportunities, while also respecting the multi-religious, cultural and national features of Iraq. We are earnestly pursuing the development of think tanks in order to develop a human approach aimed at leading society towards sustainable peace and making it part and parcel of the daily lives of the Iraqi citizens.

It is very clear that since 2003 Iraq has lived through an exceptional phase in its socio-political history. It suffered an aggressive, racist and terrorist attack by Al-Qaida and subsequently by Da'esh terrorist gangs in 2014. They targeted the very existence of the State and its intellectual system and spilled the blood of our citizens of all sects and religions. However, the synergistic efforts of Iraqis with the support of the international community saved the country from those terrorist gangs, while preventing them from spreading to other parts of the region and the world. Terrorism was defeated in Mesopotamia. The Government of Iraq announced last year all-out victory against such criminal gangs. Iraqis understand very well the principles of human rights and how to address them and insist that they will be part of their future.

The United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015. We believe that many of its decisions reflect the global ideas of the late leader Nelson Mandela. They focus primarily on educating and advancing individuals in order to accept others in the spirit of coexistence. Iraq now works in earnest on incorporating those goals into its governmental scheme.

In conclusion, I would like to note that we, as States Members of the United Nations, can realize and sustain peace while also preventing internal, regional and international conflicts.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Ethiopia.

Mr. Amde (Ethiopia): We join the whole world in paying special tribute to Nelson Mandela — one of Africa's greatest sons, an inspiration to humankind and a global icon. Today we have an opportunity to celebrate the life of Mandela and reflect on his legacy. It was a life of endless courage, boundless sacrifice, measureless perseverance and indomitable action. He fought ceaselessly for the ideals of freedom and justice, equality, tolerance and reconciliation. Those are the very ideals to which the Organization is dedicated and that are inscribed in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Just 20 years ago, the General Assembly celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. During the summit, President Nelson Mandela said at the general debate that the challenges of the next half century would be

> "whether humanity, and especially those who will occupy positions of leadership, will have the courage to ensure that at last we build a human world consistent with the provisions of that historic Declaration and other human rights instruments that have been adopted since 1948." (*A/53/PV.7, p.14*)

We do not think we have yet made the significant progress that he would have wanted and hoped for.

Mandela dedicated his entire life to the cause of freedom and justice. His struggle to liberate South Africa from apartheid will be remembered for generations to come. He passed through countless trials and tribulations. It was indeed a long walk to freedom, but he still kept the courage to preach tolerance, forgiveness and reconciliation.

A young Madiba spent time in Ethiopia during the early days of his struggle. I am proud to say we provided him with some of the support and training he needed for his struggle against apartheid and colonialism. He remembered and said that Ethiopia always held a special place in his heart and imagination. And we Ethiopians hold a special place for him in our hearts too. We revere his place in the history of Africa's freedom, even more so today. As we undertake considerable reform, we look to the values and ideals for which he fought. We are engaging our people with his message of forgiveness and reconciliation, tolerance and dialogue to sustain the peace, stability and development of our country.

We are not confining our efforts to Ethiopia. We in the Horn of Africa are living up to our commitment to silence the guns by 2020 so as to lift the burden of conflict and war from our children. We are working towards making peace a reality for our people. Over the past three months, we have launched region-wide reconciliation and started the process of normalization between and among most of the countries of the Horn of Africa. Ethiopia and Eritrea have opened a new chapter in their relationship, ending two decades of conflict. That spirit of reconciliation is also reaching across Somalia, Djibouti and the Horn of Africa at large. All of us in the region have played a remarkable role in creating peaceful engagement in that regard.

The African Union Commission Chairperson rightly called it a clear demonstration of the value and effectiveness of the search for African solutions to African problems. I can say with confidence that those are major developments for the Horn of Africa region. As the Secretary-General put it, there is a powerful wind of hope blowing across the Horn of Africa region. It is a wind that offers a start to unravelling years of conflict and suspicion across a region that has been one of the most conflict-ridden in Africa. We are extending the process to promote a framework for regional integration to fight poverty.

The theme of today's Nelson Mandela Summit — "Strengthening the role of the United Nations in the promotion and maintenance of international peace: building on Mandela's legacy" — could not be more timely or appropriate. In these difficult times, Madiba's legacy has real importance and great significance for global peace. The unanimous adoption of the Nelson Mandela political declaration (resolution 73/1), declaring 2019 as the start of the Nelson Mandela Decade of Peace, is most welcome. We ourselves are already nearly half-way through the Nelson Mandela Decade for Reconciliation in Africa, declared by the African Union summit four years ago. Its member States have been encouraged to promote truth and reconciliation as a means to advance democracy and participatory governance and work to secure peace, stability and development in Africa. However, we should do more than just renew our pledge to the building of a just, peaceful, prosperous, inclusive and fair world — a world in which Mandela would have been proud to participate. To celebrate the life of this extraordinary man, we should act and follow his precept:

> "We can change the world and make it a better place. It is in our hands to make a difference."

Our future is indeed in our hands.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the observer of the Observer State of the Holy See.

Archbishop Auza (Holy See): Mandela's legacy has become synonymous with the promotion of peace and non-violence, reconciliation and healing, non-discrimination and the promotion of human rights. In a telegram to express his condolences on the death of Nelson Mandela, Pope Francis paid tribute to his steadfast commitment in promoting the human dignity of citizens from all nations and in forging a new South Africa built on the firm foundations of non-violence, reconciliation and truth. The centenary of Mandela's birth reminds us of another centenary, that of the end of the First World War — a conflict that violently disfigured the face of Europe. Reflecting on the Great War and the life of Nelson Mandela, two great lessons emerge that could serve as golden rules to foster peace.

The first lesson is that victory never means humiliating a defeated foe. Peace is not built by vaunting the power of the victor over the vanquished. The haughty glory of the victor sows a seed of rancor that would sprout at the first opportunity as vengeance, whereas humility in victory is a promise of reconciliation. After 27 years of imprisonment, Mandela's sacrifices were vindicated with the end of apartheid and his becoming the President of South Africa. He was gracious and generous in victory and remained humble before the cheers of the world. His wisdom led him to reject recrimination in favour of reconciliation and to extend a hand of friendship to those who had made him suffer, for he was convinced that the future demanded moving beyond the past.

The second lesson is that peace is consolidated when nations can discuss matters on equal terms. There is a reason that the League of Nations was born after the Great War, and then the United Nations out of the dying embers of the Second World War. Effective multilateralism is a concrete expression of the family of nations. As Pope John Paul II affirmed in his address to the General Assembly on 5 October 1995,

> "The United Nations needs to rise more and more above the cold status of an administrative institution and become a moral centre where all the nations of the world feel at home and develop a shared awareness of being, as it were, a family of nations. The idea of 'family' immediately evokes something more than simple functional relations or a mere convergence of interests. The family is by nature a community based on mutual trust, mutual support and sincere respect. In an authentic family the strong do not dominate; instead, the weaker members, because of their very weakness, are all the more welcomed and served." (*A/50/PV.20, p. 5*)

In Nelson Mandela's legacy we find that idea in the very rich concept of ubuntu, according to which people are made people through other people — that we are one humankind so bound to one another that we flourish only if we help people around us flourish.

The political declaration adopted at the beginning of this Peace Summit (resolution 73/1) acknowledges that we must seek the conversion of heart and mind that can make a difference. A conversion of hearts is needed. The Holy See joins Member States in every effort to work strenuously for true peace, while expressing hope that the daily commitment of us all will continue to bear fruit and that there will be an effective application in international law for the right to peace as a fundamental human right and a necessary prerequisite to every other right.

As Mandela counsels in his autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom*,

> "If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy. Then he becomes your partner."

May Mandela's inspiring perseverance in seeking justice, freedom and peace be a motivation for this family of nations to redouble our efforts and dedication in the quest for a more just, and therefore more peaceful, world.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the observer of the Observer State of Palestine.

Ms. Abdelhady-Nasser (Palestine): We thank the President of the General Assembly and the representatives of South Africa and Ireland for their laudable efforts to bring us together on this momentous occasion.

The late, honourable President Mandela is widely quoted as having insightfully stated,

> "We know too well that our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians."

With those words he further reinforced the unbreakable bond between those who have suffered oppression and those who have struggled side-by-side to defeat it. While imprisoned, Mandela never lost sight of the path to freedom and remained a messenger of peace and coexistence. As we honour him, we honour and uphold the ideals and true justice that he dedicated his life to defending, including, as the adopted declaration (resolution 73/1) reaffirms, the right to the self-determination of peoples who remain under colonial domination or foreign occupation.

Upholding those ideals means rejecting domination, oppression, discrimination and injustice, while never compromising on the right to freedom, dignity and equality for all peoples. It means standing together in solidarity. It means defending multilateralism and its principal foundation, international law. It means actively working for peace, not only speaking or dreaming of peace, but striving daily to rid our world of conflict and all forms of injustice and inequality.

As we commemorate Mandela's centenary and the seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, nothing can justify the fact that the Palestinian people continue to be denied their inalienable rights, even after having endured more than seven decades of dispossession, displacement and oppression, and with no end to their suffering in sight. We stood alongside many nations that are represented here during their long walks to freedom and proudly celebrated their independence with them. We still await the moment when we can celebrate our freedom.

Transformed by their own experiences of the ills of oppression, Mandela and his companions could not abide by any form of injustice. That explains why they were and still are among the most vocal in denouncing Israel's colonial occupation and what they themselves describe as the resurgence of apartheid in Palestine. Ahmed Kathrada, who spent 26 years in apartheid jails, dedicated the last years of his life to the freedom of Palestinian prisoners and the Palestinian people. The late Theo-Ben Gurirab of Namibia, who once presided over the General Assembly, was also among the strongest advocates of our just cause, as is the Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu. While solidarity with the Palestinian people is strong worldwide, for which we are grateful, it has found in South Africa its ultimate expression.

In recognition of the deep ties between our struggles, the city of Johannesburg offered a statue of Mandela to the city of Ramallah. That statue now stands proudly in the heart of occupied Palestine, bearing witness to an anachronistic, illegal and colonial occupation regime, but also as an inspiration of what the future might be once it ends. Apartheid and colonialism must not be the fate of either the Palestinian people or the Israeli people. They are man-made disasters that can and must be defeated for a just peace to prevail.

However, apartheid in South Africa was not defeated by mere words. It took the struggle of a nation, global solidarity and measures of accountability against that abhorrent regime to bring it to an end. It is time to resort to similar means to achieve a similar goal — the freedom for the Palestinian people, as well as peace and coexistence for all on the holiest of lands, so that there are no oppressors and no oppressed, only brothers and sisters in humanity. May the spirit of Madiba help guide us on that path.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the observer of the International Development Law Organization.

Mr. Civili (International Development Law Organization): I am the Permanent Observer of the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) to the United Nations, and with your permission, Sir, I will read out a statement that our Director General was to deliver last week, before the meeting was suspended.

> "Nelson Mandela was born at a time when inequality between races and genders was accepted in both policy and fact, when nations used force to pursue their agendas and the gap between the rich and the poor seemed too big to overcome. Unfortunately, our world today is not that different. Yes, apartheid is dead, but many of the other things that Mandela fought against are still alive today and in some cases thriving — entrenched poverty, growing inequalities, violent conflicts, widespread violence against women and girls, rising authoritarianism, intolerance and the erosion of human rights. There can be no peace without justice.
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> "Our Director General was one of many among the crowds in London in 2005 when Nelson Mandela said,
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> '[O]vercoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life.'
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> "We know this only too well at the International Development Law Organization, the world's only intergovernmental organization that is exclusively devoted to advancing the contribution of the rule of law to development. For 30 years we have been working in some of the poorest and most fragile parts of the world to reform laws, strengthen institutions and empower people to access justice and claim their rights. The rule of law is not an abstract concept but rather the means by which peaceful and inclusive societies can be built. It gives a widow the rights to the land that she has farmed for decades. It enables a community to resolve its disputes in a courtroom rather than on the battlefield. It empowers the poor to hold the powerful to account. Access to justice and the rule of law are integral elements of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They are also fundamental to preventing conflicts and sustaining peace.
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> "IDLO welcomes the political declaration adopted at this Summit (resolution 73/1). We note in particular the call to move beyond words. The biggest threat to peace is a failure of leadership — the failure to stand up against intolerance, the erosion

of human rights and attacks on the rule of law at the national and international level. Mandela's legacy is one of courageous leadership. If I may recall his words again, 'Recognize that the world is hungry for action, not words. Act with courage and vision'. Let us all act with courage and vision."

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the observer of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance.

Mr. Tommasoli (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance): It is an honour for me to celebrate the legacy of a great man of peace and a democratic leader whose wisdom and compassion continue to inspire democracy advocates, human rights defenders and peacebuilders around the world. His life and legacy are particularly important to the mission and work of the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, which has proudly counted South Africa among its founding members since our establishment in 1995, one year after the end of apartheid and the first democratic elections in South Africa.

We are humbled by the opportunity to recall Madiba's two key messages that continue to guide our action to this day. The first is that dialogue as a means to achieve democracy, peace and development is at the core of his legacy. Even at the darkest time of his fight against apartheid, and especially during the challenging period of transition towards a democratic South Africa, he underscored the importance of dialogue and the need to look holistically at the mutually sustaining goals of democracy, peace and development, which are enshrined in the South African Constitution.

The second message is that freedom and democracy are values that we should always defend, irrespective of the consequences. Many delegations have quoted Mandela the statesman and Nobel Peace laureate. I would like to quote him when he was facing trial. In 1964, when he was about to be sentenced to imprisonment, he said,

> "During my lifetime I have dedicated myself to this struggle of the African people. I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons will live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."

We join the many voices that have today echoed the values that Mandela so valiantly promoted and that are at the core of the ideals of the United Nations.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the observer of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Ms. Torsney (Inter-Parliamentary Union): "If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy. Then he becomes your partner." That memorable quote of Nelson Mandela is a clear example of his wisdom and illustrates the value of his legacy. We are all different. Each of us has a particular point of view and concrete proposals to address the challenges that our world is facing today. But staying entrenched in our positions will not contribute to long-term sustainable solutions. Working together, as partners, and putting aside our differences is the only way to move forward. That is what the United Nations does, by promoting tolerance and peaceful coexistence.

That is also what we do at the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the global organization of national parliaments. We foster dialogue, build bridges between people and promote peace and understanding among parliamentarians from around the world and from all political factions. The IPU and its 178 member parliaments welcome this Peace Summit in honour of Nelson Mandela. The world needs more leaders who are guided by ideals of equality, understanding and compassion, like Madiba. In a few weeks, at our 139th Assembly, in Geneva, the IPU will celebrate the centenary of Mr. Mandela's birth and the seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The global parliamentary community will pay tribute to the legacy of Madiba and will recommit to the principles enshrined in the Declaration.

The human race is on a course towards self-destruction. Its drivers are many, but they can be summed up in a few points — a global competition for resources and new markets, a senseless arms race and rising inequality and economic insecurity around the world. As a result, people are growing angry and see enemies where friends should be found. Governments that reflect that anger are increasingly being elected, and they are searching for opportunities to win what they perceive to be a zero-sum game. In the process, they exploit racism, xenophobia and other fears in order to fuel even more anger and division among people.

Let us take a minute to think about that. Globally, we are producing and consuming more than nature can generate. Our economic model is tilted towards growth as an end in itself and does not value human well-being, which, at the end of the day, is all that really matters. Can we sleep soundly when we know that we are contributing to the inexorable and tragic end of humanity? We have a responsibility as individuals. Our actions have a concrete impact on other people and on nature. We also have a collective responsibility as communities and nations. Our first responsibility is to work resolutely towards attaining the Sustainable Development Goals, as they represent our best option for achieving environmental sustainability and social and economic justice. Importantly, we need to recognize the value of democracy and human rights as the bedrock of peace. Democracy empowers people and provides them with a way to work through their differences and find solutions to their problems, whatever they are.

The President returned to the Chair.

Inspired by Nelson Mandela's legacy, let us all work together, Governments and parliaments, as partners for peace in a sustainable world.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the observer of the South Centre.

Mr. Montes (South Centre): I am honoured to read out the South Centre's statement for the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit on behalf of my director, Mr. Carlos Correa.

> "The South Centre is greatly pleased to join the international community and the people of South Africa in this historic Nelson Mandela Peace Summit. This is a memorable event in the year of celebrations of the centenary of the birth of the founding father of the South African nation, a giant of humankind.
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> "Our remarks are centred on Mandela's contribution to social development as he battled the unjust system of apartheid. They also refer to one of the many examples of his capacity to listen to and address the problems of the people, particularly the poor. Mr. Mandela's fight against oppression and poverty and for social justice is an example to us all. His legacy remains a strong source of inspiration for all people. He taught us to be strong in our beliefs and committed to our cause, to respect, to forgive and to make peace. He was an icon in the fight for freedom, social justice and a dignified life, to which all human beings are entitled despite the fact that because of greed and hunger, many are still condemned to a life of suffering and poverty.
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> "South Africa's progress in social development since the end of apartheid is clear. Apartheid was the main obstacle to that development. It was the system that normalized and enforced discrimination against non-white South Africans in education, health, decent work, income-earning assets and a dignified life. The legal system condemned non-whites to a life of poverty and vulnerability. Leading the African National Congress, Mandela overturned that system to ensure that all South Africans would be treated equally under the law and that all forms of discrimination were ended. The fact that in September 2015 the United Nations community was able to arrive at an agreement on transforming our world (resolution 70/1) would have been impossible to imagine if apartheid had still reigned in South Africa.
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> "I now turn to the example of Mandela's sensitivity to the suffering of the people, especially the poor. In an interview in April 2001, Mandela, then a private citizen after serving as South Africa's President, spoke forthrightly against the 39 multinational companies that had taken the Government to court over its decision to use flexibilities allowed under World Trade Organization rules to foster access to medicines to fight the HIV/AIDS epidemic. At that time, official figures showed that one in nine South Africans was infected with HIV or already had AIDS, and only a tiny minority of those 4.7 million people could afford appropriate drugs. As a court respondent, Mandela said,
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>> 'I think the pharmaceuticals are exploiting the situation that exists in countries like South Africa, in the developing world, because they charge exorbitant prices which are beyond the capacity of the ordinary HIV/AIDS person. That is completely wrong and must be condemned.'
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> "Mandela joined his voice with those who claimed that the Government's action was necessary and fully legitimate:
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>> 'The Government is perfectly entitled, in facing that situation, to resort to generic drugs, and it is a gross error for the companies, for

> the pharmaceuticals, to take the Government to court.'
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> "Mr. Mandela's intervention contributed to the mounting pressure on multinational pharmaceutical firms to abide by the internationally agreed patent rules and abandon their attempts to further expand patent rights in the developing world. His intervention represented a strong ethical call to subordinate commercial interests to the right to health.
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> "As the think tank of developing countries working on multilateral affairs, we are indebted to Nelson Mandela. He was a strong supporter of the South Centre. In his address at the opening session of the South Centre's Council of Representatives in 1998 in New York, he said,
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> > 'As the premier source of research on issues affecting the South, and growing out of the work and experience of the South Commission, the Centre plays a role whose value for the developing world cannot be underestimated.'
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> "In recognizing the work and value of the South Centre as a research institution of the South, he also paid a tribute to another great son of Africa, his good friend the late Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, the founding father of the South Commission, which led to the establishment of the South Centre, the intergovernmental organization of developing countries. The work and legacy of two of the greatest sons of Africa remain the driving forces in our daily work to support the efforts of developing countries to reach inclusive and sustainable development."

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the observer of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

Mr. Awawdeh (Organization of Islamic Cooperation) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is an honour for me to be in this Hall today to commemorate a true hero of our times. There can be no doubt that Nelson Mandela left a great legacy that demonstrates the importance of peaceful struggle, of patience and of modesty in victory, while promoting reconciliation among South Africans. His ideas, his fight and his victories constitute a collective legacy that we are proud of.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the General Assembly for convening this high-level meeting on global peace to mark the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Nelson Mandela. We are also immensely grateful to South Africa and Ireland for their efforts in organizing this event, which represents a source of inspiration that will light our path in the days to come as we seek to sustain peace throughout the world. The experience of Nelson Mandela and his struggle are models to follow in terms of national reconciliation and democracy-building. Addressing isolation through integration, exclusion through engagement and discrimination through coexistence will ultimately result in a strong and cohesive society based on citizenship and diversity, capable of bringing a nation to the highest levels of progress, development, security and prosperity. That is the model that we hope to see in Yemen, Iraq, Syria and other Member States.

The Palestinian question remains the main cause for our organization. We fully support the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to be free from occupation and achieve independence while living in peace and dignity on their own land. The Palestinian people have lived for seven decades under continuous repression, deprived of their basic human rights. If we truly believe in Nelson Mandela's vision and ideals, we should commit to peace and to settling the Palestinian question on fair foundations in accordance with United Nations resolutions. Mandela has a famous saying: "[O]ur freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians".

We should align our thoughts and values with those of Nelson Mandela in our collective quest to achieve peace. We must not only talk about the apartheid that Nelson Mandela rose up against. We must also talk about the racist wall of separation built by Israel to separate Palestinians from Israeli settlements built on occupied Palestinian land. We must achieve peace and justice for the Palestinian people and for the peoples of Yemen, Iraq, Libya, Syria and Kashmir and others such as the Rohingya minority in Myanmar.

The absolute truth is that racial discrimination still exists everywhere on the planet. We must therefore sincerely commit today to honouring all of the commitments we have made and to addressing oppression and tyranny, as well as supporting the oppressed and the victims while standing by them. The only way to express our appreciation and respect for Nelson Mandela is by safeguarding his legacy and taking it further.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the observer of the International Organization of la Francophonie.

Ms. Herdt (International Organization of la Francophonie) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour of delivering the message of Ms. Michaëlle Jean, Secretary-General of the International Organization of la Francophonie.

> "It is with great respect that I welcome the holding of the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit and the platform it offers us today to rebuild the values at the heart of our work. We speak with one voice — Nelson Mandela's legacy compels us to. This Summit carries with it a deep emotion that galvanizes us and reminds us of the evidence of our common humanity and our shared destiny. To be free is not only being able to throw off our chains, it is being able to live in a way that respects and strengthens the freedom of others. Nelson Mandela, a man of peace and wisdom, kindness and forgiveness, taught us the unconditional respect that we owe to each and every human being.
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> "His powerful legacy relentlessly compels us to meet our dual responsibilities. First, we are called on to meet our individual responsibilities, because it is above all through the daily exercise of will and courage that we can all contribute to building a world marked by mutual respect, tolerance and understanding in our relationships. And after that, we must also meet our collective responsibilities, through the official missions entrusted to us that task us with safeguarding the general interest and ensuring full respect for the equal dignity of all.
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> "La Francophonie stands ready to fully assume its rightful place. I would like to assure the Assembly that we are up to the task of acting with the essential courage that the people demand of us. As the political declaration (resolution 73/1) solemnly adopted at the opening of this Summit reminds us, it is up to us to take responsibility as we address the Assembly, and as the leaders of our organizations, we must work to break down resistance and do everything we can to tackle those who would cast doubt on the primacy of multilateralism. That was behind the conclusions of the high-level interactive dialogue with the heads of international and regional organizations held in June at the initiative of the Secretary-General, to which we actively contributed. The Assembly can count on La Francophonie's commitment not only to promoting but above all to realizing the multilateralism that we have called for, both in networking and in action, based on improving the complementarity and coordination of our efforts.
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> "The entire francophone world is committed to participating in these struggles. "Living together in solidarity, sharing humanistic values and respecting diversity: a source of peace and prosperity in the francophone area" will be the theme of the seventeenth Summit of Heads of State and Government of la Francophonie when our politicians and diplomats meet in Yerevan, Armenia, on 11 and 12 October.
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> "That is also the meaning behind the tools and mechanisms that we continue to develop in the service of peace. The International Organization of la Francophonie has never ceased to support those of its members in difficulties, in our understanding that democracy, peace and development are inseparable. In both the French-speaking world and the world in general, our objective is to encourage renewed mobilization to prevent and settle crises and conflicts peacefully, to enshrine fundamental rights and the fight against inequality and identify innovative measures in a continually challenging international context. La Francophonie continues to oppose the notion of cultural relativism, because what defines us — beyond the diversity of our cultures, languages and characteristics of our civilizations — is shared universal values. The Libres Ensemble initiative, an expression of the hope and determination of francophone youth in response to movements of hatred and the rejection of others, also magnificently echoes the teachings of Nelson Mandela.
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> "At a time of retreat into nationalism, dialogue and solidarity are essential. The Fez Summit Conference on dialogue between cultures and religions, held a few days ago in Morocco, was similarly aimed at promoting new relationships based on the renewal of a culture of peace and coexistence by questioning our diversity and our otherness.
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> "At a time when we are striving to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, when we have at last realized that prevention and the

> patient and meticulous building of lasting peace should be our greatest priority — but also at a time when our humanity is being questioned by the disgrace and horror that are destroying the lives of tens of millions of men, women and children, and when the very survival of future generations in the face of climate change is in our hands — will we be capable of living up to the legacy of Nelson Mandela, a man who never ceased to believe, despite the immensity of the trials he faced, that 'love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite'? We are infinitely grateful to him for his legacy, and we owe it to ourselves never to betray him."

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Director of the Liaison Office of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Mrs. Mucavi (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations): Freeing the world from hunger and want is a fundamental contribution to lasting peace. Those words are part of the Constitution of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and were introduced by our founders in 1945 when it was created immediately after the end of the Second World War.

Nelson Mandela's historic centenary once again obliges us to recognize that promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms such as the right to food and to economic and social development is key to achieving inclusive and peaceful societies, as set forth in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Regrettably, the *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World* 2018 report shows that 821 million people are suffering from hunger and malnutrition today. The increase in that number during the past year is due to two main reasons, conflicts and climate change. The evidence is clear — where conflicts arise, hunger increases. There is a direct relationship between them, and the impact of wars and conflict on hunger and malnutrition is even worse when one considers that global military spending continues to increase while the resources that countries can allocate to eradicating hunger and poverty are scarce and sometimes decreasing. According to the *Global Report on Food Crises* 2018, 60 per cent of the people who experienced acute hunger in 2017 were in conflict areas. Earlier this year, with its unanimous adoption of resolution 2417 (2018), the Security Council drew attention to the link between armed conflicts and conflict-induced food insecurity and the threat of famine. The FAO has contributed to that important step by generating the evidence through the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, the *Global Report on Food Crises* and the regular FAO-World Food Programme briefings to the Security Council.

The FAO is strongly committed to promoting food security and peace. In 2016, for instance, together with several Nobel Peace Prize laureates, we established the FAO-Nobel Peace Laureates Alliance for Food Security and Peace to tackle the twin problems of hunger and violence. Last week, we were pleased to admit Ms. Graça Machel to honorary membership of the Alliance as a tribute to Mandela's work for freedom and peace. As Madiba said,

> "Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings. And overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice."

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the last speaker for this meeting.

We have thus concluded the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit. The participation of more than 150 speakers and the adoption of a powerful political declaration (resolution 73/1) attests to the commitment of the General Assembly to the principles that guided the life and transformative action of Madiba. At this Summit we have affirmed our commitment to multilateralism for addressing global threats and challenges. I invite one and all to be inspired in their daily work by the ideals that inspired this great leader, such as peace, development, disarmament and the defence of fundamental rights.

The Nelson Mandela Peace Summit is now concluded.

The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 66.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.